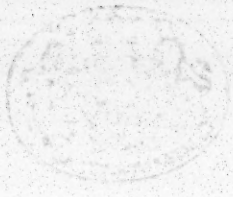

THE PREFACE.

IN one of the *letters*, which bear the title of *edifying*, though moſt of them ſwarm with ridiculous errours, and all muſt be conſulted with extreme diffidence, I met ſome years ago with the following paſſage: "In the north of *India* "there are many books, called *Nátac*, which, "as the *Bráhmens* aſſert, contain a large portion "of *ancient hiſtory without any mixture of fable*;" and, having an eager deſire to know the real ſtate of this empire before the conqueſt of it by the Savages of the North, I was very ſolicitous, on my arrival in *Bengal*, to procure acceſs to thoſe books, either by the help of tranſlations, if they had been tranſlated, or by learning the language, in which they were originally compoſed, and which I had yet a ſtronger inducement to learn from its connection with the adminiſtration of

juſtice to the *Hindus*; but, when I was able to converſe with the *Bráhmens*, they aſſured me that the *Nátacs* were *not hiſtories, and abounded with fables*; that they were extremely popular works, and conſiſted of converſations in proſe and verſe, held before ancient *Rájás* in their publick aſſemblies, on an infinite variety of ſubjects and in various dialects of *India*: this definition gave me no very diſtinct idea, but I concluded, that they were dialogues on moral or literary topicks; whilſt other *Europeans*, whom I conſulted, had underſtood from the natives, that they were diſcourſes on dancing, muſick, or poetry. At length a very ſenſible *Bráhmen*, named *RÁDHÁCÁNT*, who had long been attentive to *Engliſh* manners, removed all my doubts, and gave me no leſs delight than ſurprize, by telling me, that our nation had compoſitions of the ſame ſort, which were publickly repreſented at *Calcutta* in the cold ſeaſon, and bore the name, as he had been informed, of *Plays*. Reſolving at my leiſure to read the beſt of them, I aſked which of their *Nátacs* was moſt univerſally eſteemed; and he anſwered without heſitation *SACONTALÁ*, ſupporting his opinion,

as uſual among the *Pandits*, by a couplet to this effect: "The ring of *SACONTALÁ*, in which "the fourth act, and four ſtanzas of that act, "are eminently brilliant, diſplays all the rich "exuberance of *CÁLIDÁSA*'s genius." I ſoon procured a correct copy of it; and, aſſiſted by my teacher *RÁMALÓCHAN*, began with tranſlating it verbally into *Latin*, which bears ſo great a reſemblance to *Sanſcrit*, that it is more convenient than any modern language for a ſcrupulous interlineary verſion: I then turned it word for word into *Engliſh*, and afterwards, without adding or ſuppreſſing any material ſentence, diſengaged it from the ſtiffneſs of a foreign idiom, and prepared the faithful tranſlation of the *Indian* Drama, which I now preſent to the publick as a moſt pleaſing and authentick picture of old *Hindu* manners, and one of the greateſt curioſities, that the literature of *Aſia* has yet brought to light.

DRAMATICK poetry muſt have been immemorially ancient in the *Indian* empire: the invention of it is commonly aſcribed to *BHERET*, a ſage believed to have been inſpired, who

invented alſo a ſyſtem of muſick, which bears his name; but this opinion of its origin is rendered very doubtful by the univerſal belief, that the firſt *Sanſcrit* verſe ever heard by mortals was pronounced in a burſt of reſentment by the great *VÁLMIC*, who flouriſhed in the *ſilver* age of the world, and was author of an Epick Poem on the war of his contemporary, *RÁMA*, king of *Ayédhyà*; ſo that no drama in verſe could have been repreſented before his time; and the *Indians* have a wild ſtory, that the firſt regular play, on the ſame ſubject with the *Rámáyan*, was compoſed by *HANUMAT* or *PAVAN*, who commanded an army of Satyrs or Mountaineers in *RÁMA*'s expedition againſt *Lancà*: they add, that he engraved it on a ſmooth rock, which, being diſſatisfied with his compoſition, he hurled into the ſea; and that, many years after, a learned prince ordered expert divers to take impreſſions of the poem on wax, by which means the drama was in great meaſure reſtored; and my *Pandit* aſſures me, that he is in poſſeſſion of it. By whomſoever or in whatever age this ſpecies of entertainment was invented, it is very certain, that it was carried

to great perfection in its kind, when *VICRAMÁDITYA*, who reigned in the firſt century before *CHRIST*, gave encouragement to poets, philologers, and mathematicians, at a time when the *Britons* were as unlettered and unpoliſhed as the army of *HANUMAT:* nine men of genius, commonly called the *nine gems*, attended his court and were ſplendidly ſupported by his bounty; and *CÁLIDÁS* is unanimouſly allowed to have been the brighteſt of them. A modern epigram was lately repeated to me, which does ſo much honour to the author of *Sacontalá*, that I cannot forbear exhibiting a literal verſion of it: "*Poetry* "was the ſportful daughter of *VÁLMIC*, and, "having been educated by *VYÁSA*, ſhe choſe "*CÁLIDÁS* for her bridegroom after the man-"ner of *Vidarbha:* ſhe was the mother of "ÁMARA, SUNDAR, *SANC'HA*, *DHANIC*; "but now, old and decrepit, her beauty faded, "and her unadorned feet ſlipping as ſhe walks, "in whoſe cottage does ſhe diſdain to take "ſhelter?"

ALL the other works of our illuſtrious poet, the *SHAKSPEAR* of *India*, that have yet come

to my knowledge, are a ſecond play in five acts, entitled *URVASI*; an heroick poem, or rather a ſeries of poems in one book, on the *Children of the Sun*; another, with perfect unity of action, on the Birth of *CUMÁRA*, God of War; two or three love-tales in verſe; and an excellent little work on *Sanſcrit* Metre, preciſely in the manner of *TERENTIANUS*; but he is believed by ſome to have reviſed the works of *VÁLMIC* and *VYÁSA*, and to have corrected the perfect editions of them, which are now current: this at leaſt is admitted by all, that he ſtands next in reputation to thoſe venerable bards; and we muſt regret, that he has left only two Dramatick Poems, eſpecially as the ſtories in his *Raghuvanſa* would have ſupplied him with a number of excellent ſubjects. Some of his contemporaries, and other *Hindu* poets even to our own times, have compoſed ſo many tragedies, comedies, farces, and muſical pieces, that the *Indian* theatre would fill as many volumes as that of any nation in ancient or modern *Europe*: all the *Pandits* aſſert, that their plays are innumerable; and, on my firſt inquiries concerning them, I had notice of more

than thirty, which they conſider as the flower of their *Nátacs*, among which the *Malignant Child*, the *Rape of USHÁ*, the *Taming of DURVÁSAS*, the *Seizure of the Lock*, *MÁLATI* and *MÁDHAVA*, with five or ſix dramas on the adventures of their incarnate Gods, are the moſt admired after thoſe of *CÁLIDÁS*. They are all in verſe, where the dialogue is elevated, and in proſe, where it is familiar: the men of rank and learning are repreſented ſpeaking pure *Sanſcrit*, and the women, *Prácrit*, which is little more than the language of the *Bráhmens* melted down by a delicate articulation to the ſoftneſs of *Italian*; while the low perſons of the drama ſpeak the vulgar dialects of the ſeveral provinces, which they are ſuppoſed to inhabit.

THE play of *Sacontalá* muſt have been very popular, when it was firſt repreſented; for the *Indian* empire was then in full vigour, and the national vanity muſt have been highly flattered by the magnificent introduction of thoſe kings and heroes, in whom the *Hindus* gloried; the ſcenery muſt have been ſplendid and beautiful; and there is good reaſon to believe, that the court

at *Avanti* was equal in brilliancy during the reign of *VICRAMÁDITYA*, to that of any monarch in any age or country. *DUSHMANTA*, the Hero of the piece, appears in the chronological tables of the *Bráhmens* among the *Children of the Moon*, and in the twenty-firſt generation after the flood, ſo that, if we can at all rely on the chronology of the *Hindus*, he was nearly contemporary with *OBED*, or *JESSE*; and *PURU*, his moſt celebrated anceſtor, was the fifth in deſcent from *BUDHA*, or *MERCURY*, who married, they ſay, a daughter of the pious King, whom *VISHNU* preſerved in an ark from the univerſal deluge: his eldeſt ſon *BHERET* was the illuſtrious progenitor of *CURU*, from whom *PÁNDU* was lineally deſcended, and in whoſe family the *Indian APOLLO* became incarnate; whence the poem, next in fame to the *Rámáyan*, is called *Mahábhárat*.

AS to the machinery of the drama, it is taken from the ſyſtem of Mythology, which prevails to this day, and which it would require a large volume to explain; but we cannot help remarking, that the deities introduced in the Fatal Ring

are clearly allegorical perſonages. *Marícbi*, the firſt production of *BRAHMÁ*, or the *Creative Power*, ſignifies *Light*, that ſubtil fluid, which was created before its reſervoir, the Sun, as water was created before the ſea; *Caſyapa*, the offſpring of *Maríchi*, ſeems to be a perſonification of *infinite ſpace*, comprehending innumerable worlds, and his children by *Aditi*, or his *active power* (unleſs *Aditi* mean the primeval *Day*, and *Diti*, his other wife, the *Night*) are *INDRA*, or the viſible firmament, and the twelve *Adityas*, or Suns, preſiding over as many months.

ON the characters and conduct of the play I ſhall offer no criticiſm; becauſe I am convinced, that the taſtes of men differ as much as their ſentiments and paſſions, and that, in feeling the beauties of art, as in ſmelling flowers, taſting fruits, viewing proſpects, and hearing melody, every individual muſt be guided by his own ſenſations and the incommunicable aſſociations of his own ideas. This only I may add, that, if *Sacontalá* ſhould ever be acted in *India*, where alone it could be acted with perfect knowledge of *Indian* dreſſes, manners, and ſcenery, the

piece might eaſily be reduced to five acts of a moderate length, by throwing the third act into the ſecond, and the ſixth into the fifth; for it muſt be confeſſed, that the whole of *DUSHMANTA's* converſation with his buffoon, and great part of his courtſhip in the hermitage, might be omitted without any injury to the drama.

IT is my anxious wiſh, that others may take the pains to learn *Sanſcrit*, and may be perſuaded to tranſlate the works of *CÁLIDÁS*: I ſhall hardly again employ my leiſure in a taſk ſo foreign to my profeſſional (which are in truth my favourite) ſtudies, and have no intention of tranſlating any other book from any language, except the law-tract of *MENU*, and the new Digeſt of *Indian* and *Arabian* laws; but, to ſhow that the *Bráhmens* at leaſt do not think polite literature incompatible with juriſprudence, I cannot avoid mentioning, that the venerable compiler of the *Hindu* Digeſt, who is now in his eighty-ſixth year, has the whole play of *Sacontalá* by heart, as he proved, when I laſt converſed with him, to my entire conviction: leſt, however, I ſhould hereafter ſeem to have changed a reſolution, which I

mean to keep inviolate, I think it proper to ſay, that I have already tranſlated four or five other books, and among them the *Hitópadeſa*, which I undertook, merely as an exerciſe in learning *Sanſcrit*, three years before I knew, that *Mr. WILKINS*, without whoſe aid I ſhould never have learned it, had any thought of giving the ſame work to the publick.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

DUSHMANTA, *Emperor of* India.

SACONTALÁ, *the Heroine of the Piece.*

ANUSÚYA,
PRIYAMVADA, } *Damsels attendant on Her.*

MÁDHAVYA, *the Emperor's Buffoon.*

GAUTAMÍ, *an old female Hermit.*

SÁRNGARAVA,
SÁRADWATA, } *two* Bráhmens.

CANNA, *Foster-father of* Sacontalà.

CUMBHÍLACA, *a Fisherman.*

MISRACESÍ, *a Nymph.*

MÁTALI, *Charioteer of* Indra.

A little Boy.

CASYAPA,
ADITI, } *Deities, Parents of* Indra.

Officers of State and Police, Bráhmens, Damsels, Hermits, Pupils, Chamberlains, Wardours of the Palace, Messengers, and Attendants.

SACONTALÁ,

OR

THE FATAL RING.

THE PROLOGUE.

A Brâhmen *pronounces the Benediction.*

WATER was the firſt work of the Creator; and Fire receives the oblations ordained by law; the Sacrifice is performed with ſolemnity; the Two Lights of heaven diſtinguiſh time the ſubtil Ether, which is the vehicle of ſound, pervades the univerſe; the Earth is the natural parent of all increaſe; and by Air all things

breathing are animated: may ÍSA, the God of Nature, apparent in theſe eight forms, bleſs and ſuſtain you!

The Manager *enters.*

Man. What occaſion is there for a long ſpeech? *(looking towards the dreſſing-room)* When your decorations, madam, are completed, be pleaſed to come forward.

An Actreſs *enters.*

Actr. I attend, ſir.—What are your commands?

Man. This, madam, is the numerous and polite aſſembly of the famed Hero, our king *Vicramáditya*, the patron of every delightful art; and before this audience we muſt do juſtice to a new production of *Cálidás*, a dramatick piece entitled *Sacontalá*, or, *The Fatal Ring:* it is requeſted, therefore, that all will be attentive.

Actr. Who, ſir, could be inattentive to an entertainment ſo well intended?

Man. (ſmiling) I will ſpeak, madam, without reſerve.—As far as an enlightened audience receive pleaſure from our theatrical talents, and

expreſs it, ſo far, and no farther, I ſet a value on them; but my own mind is diffident of its powers, how ſtrongly ſoever exerted.

Actr. You judge rightly in meaſuring your own merit by the degree of pleaſure, which this aſſembly may receive; but its value, I truſt, will preſently appear. Have you any further commands?

Man. What better can you do, ſince you are now on the ſtage, than exhilarate the ſouls, and gratify the ſenſe, of our auditory with a ſong?

Actr. Shall I ſing the deſcription of a ſeaſon? and which of the ſeaſons do you chuſe to hear deſcribed?

Man. No finer ſeaſon could be ſelected than the ſummer, which is actually begun, and abounds with delights. How ſweet is the cloſe of a ſummer-day, which invites our youth to bathe in pure ſtreams, and induces gentle ſlumber under the ſhades refreſhed by ſylvan breezes, which have paſſed over the blooming *Pátali's* and ſtolen their fragrance!

Actr. (ſinging) "Mark, how the ſoft bloſſoms "of the *Nágacéſar* are lightly kiſſed by the bees!

" Mark, how the damſels delicately place behind
" their ears the flowers of *Iriſha!*"

Man. A charming ſtrain! The whole company ſparkles, as it were, with admiration; and the muſical mode, to which the words are adapted, has filled their ſouls with rapture. By what other performance can we enſure a continuance of their favour?

Actr. Oh! by none better than by the *Fatal Ring*, which you have juſt announced.

Man. How could I forget it? In that moment I was lulled to diſtraction by the melody of thy voice, which allured my heart, as the king *Duſhmanta* is now allured by the ſwift antelope.

They both go out.

ACT I.

SCENE, a Foreſt.

Duſhmanta *in a car purſuing an antelope, with a bow and quiver, attended by his* Charioteer.

Char. (looking at the antelope, and then at the king) When I caſt my eye on that black antelope, and on thee, O king, with thy braced bow, I ſee before me, as it were, the God *Mahéſa* chaſing a hart, with his bow, named *pináca*, braced in his left hand.

Duſhm. The fleet animal has given us a long chaſe. Oh! there he runs with his neck bent gracefully, looking back from time to time at the car, which follows him. Now, through fear of a deſcending ſhaft, he contracts his forehand and extends his flexible haunches, and now through fatigue, he pauſes to nibble the graſs in his path with his mouth half-opened. See, how he ſprings and bounds with long ſteps, lightly ſkimming the ground and riſing high in the air! And now ſo rapid in his flight, that he is ſcarce diſcernible.

Char. The ground was uneven, and the horſes were checked in their courſe. He has taken advantage of our delay. It is level now, and we may eaſily overtake him.

Duſhm. Looſen the reins.

Char. As the king commands. *He drives the car firſt at full ſpeed and then gently.*

Char. He could not eſcape. The horſes were not even touched by the clouds of duſt, which they raiſed; they toſſed their manes, erected their ears, and rather glided than gallopped over the ſmooth plain.

Duſhm. They ſoon outran the ſwift antelope. Objects, which from their diſtance appeared minute, preſently became larger: what was really divided, ſeemed united, as we paſſed; and what was in truth bent, ſeemed ſtraight. So ſwift was the motion of the wheels, that nothing for many moments was either diſtant or near. *He fixes an arrow in his bowſtring.*

(Behind the ſcenes) He muſt not be ſlain. This antelope, O king, has an aſylum in our foreſt: he muſt not be ſlain.

Char. (liſtening and looking) Juſt as the anima

preſents a fair mark for your arrow, two hermits are advancing to interrupt your aim.

Duſhm. Then ſtop the car.

Char. The king is obeyed. *He draws in the reins.*

Enter a Hermit *and his* Pupil.

Herm. (raiſing his hands) Slay not, O mighty ſovereign, ſlay not a poor fawn, who has found a place of refuge. No, ſurely, no; he muſt not be hurt. An arrow in the delicate body of a deer would be like fire in a bale of cotton. Compared with thy keen ſhafts how weak muſt be the tender hide of a young antelope! Replace quickly, oh! replace the arrow, which thou haſt aimed. The weapons of you kings and warriours are deſtined for the relief of the oppreſſed, not for the deſtruction of the guiltleſs.

Duſhm. (ſaluting them) It is replaced.

He places the arrow in his quiver.

Herm. (with joy) Worthy is that act of thee, moſt illuſtrious of monarchs; worthy, indeed, of a prince deſcended from *Puru*. Mayſt thou have

a ſon adorned with virtues, a ſovereign of the world!

Pup. *(elevating both his hands)* Oh! by all means, may thy ſon be adorned with every virtue, a ſovereign of the world!

Duſhm. *(bowing to them)* My head bears with reverence the order of a *Brahmen.*

Herm. Great king, we came hither to collect wood for a ſolemn ſacrifice; and this foreſt, on the banks of the *Málini*, affords an aſylum to the wild animals protected by *Sacontalá*, whom our holy preceptor *Canna* has received as a ſacred depoſit. If you have no other avocation, enter yon grove, and let the rites of hoſpitality be duly performed. Having ſeen with your own eyes the virtuous behaviour of thoſe whoſe only wealth is their piety, but whoſe worldly cares are now at an end, you will then exclaim: "How "many good ſubjects are defended by this arm, "which the bowſtring has made callous!"

Duſhm. Is the maſter of your family at home?

Herm. Our preceptor is gone to *Sématírt'ha*, in hopes of deprecating ſome calamity, with which deſtiny threatens the irreproachable *Sacontalá*; and

he has charged her in his abſence to receive all gueſts with due honour.

Duſhm. Holy man, I will attend her; and ſhe, having obſerved my devotion, will report it favourably to the venerable ſage.

Both. Be it ſo; and we depart on our own buſineſs.

The Hermit *and his* Pupil *go out.*

Duſhm. Drive on the car. By viſiting the abode of holineſs, we ſhall purify our ſouls.

Char. As the king (may his life be long!) commands. *He drives on.*

Duſhm. (looking on all ſides) That we are near the dwelling-place of pious hermits, would clearly have appeared, even if it had not been told.

Char. By what marks?

Duſhm. Do you not obſerve them? See under yon trees the hallowed grains, which have been ſcattered on the ground, while the tender female parrots were feeding their unfledged young in their pendent neſt. Mark in other places the ſhining pieces of poliſhed ſtone, which have bruiſed the oily fruit of the ſacred *Ingudì*. Look at the young fawns, which, having acquired con-

ſidence in man, and accuſtomed themſelves to the ſound of his voice, friſk at pleaſure without varying their courſe. Even the ſurface of the river is reddened with lines of conſecrated bark, which float down its ſtream. Look again: the roots of yon trees are bathed in the waters of holy pools, which quiver, as the breeze plays upon them; and the glowing luſtre of yon freſh leaves is obſcured for a time by ſmoke, that riſes from oblations of clarified butter. See too, where the young roes graze, without apprehenſion from our approach, on the lawn before yonder garden, where the tops of the ſacrificial graſs, cut for ſome religious rite, are ſprinkled around.

Char. I now obſerve all thoſe marks of ſome holy habitation.

Duſhm. (*turning aſide*) This awful ſanctuary, my friend, muſt not be violated. Here, therefore, ſtop the car; that I may deſcend.

Char. I hold in the reins. The king may deſcend at his pleaſure.

Duſhm. (*having deſcended, and looking at his own dreſs*) Groves, devoted to religion, muſt be entered in humbler habiliments. Take theſe regal

ornaments; *(the Charioteer receives them)* and, whilſt I am obſerving thoſe, who inhabit this retreat, let the horſes be watered and dreſſed.

Char. Be it, as you direct. *Goes out.*

Duſhm. (walking round, and looking) Now then I enter the ſanctuary. *(He enters the grove)* Oh! this place muſt be holy, my right arm throbs—*(pauſing and conſidering)* What new acquiſition does this omen promiſe in a ſequeſtered grove? But the gates of predeſtined events are in all places open.

(Behind the ſcenes) Come hither, beloved companions. Oh! come hither.

Duſhm. (liſtening) Hah! I hear female voices to the right of yon arbour. I am reſolved to know who are converſing. *(He walks round and looks)* There are ſome damſels, I ſee, belonging to the hermit's family, who carry water-pots of different ſizes proportioned to their ſtrength, and are going to water the delicate plants. Oh! how charmingly they look! If the beauty of maids, who dwell in woodland retreats, cannot eaſily be found in the receſſes of a palace, the garden-flowers muſt make room for the bloſſoms of the foreſt,

which excel them in colour and fragrance.

He ſtands gazing at them.

Enter Sacontalá, Anuſúyá, *and* Priyamvadá.

Anu. O my *Sacontalá*, it is in thy ſociety, that the trees of our father *Canna* ſeem to me delightful: it well becomes thee, who art ſoft as the freſh-blown *Mallicà*, to fill with water the canals, which have been dug round theſe tender ſhrubs.

Sac. It is not only in obedience to our father, that I thus employ myſelf, though that were a ſufficient motive; but I really feel the affection of a ſiſter for theſe young plants. *Watering them.*

Pri. My beloved friend, the ſhrubs, which you have watered, flower in the ſummer, which is now begun: let us give water to thoſe, which have paſſed their flowering-time; for our virtue will be the greater, when it is wholly diſintereſted.

Sac. Excellent advice! *Watering other plants.*

Duſhm. (aſide in tranſport) How! is that *Canna's* daughter, *Sacontalá? (with ſurprize)* The venerable ſage muſt have an unfeeling heart, ſince he has allotted a mean employment to ſo lovely a girl, and has dreſſed her in a coarſe mantle of

woven bark. He, who could wiſh, that ſo beautiful a creature, who at firſt ſight raviſhes my ſoul, ſhould endure the hardſhips of his auſtere devotion, would attempt, I ſuppoſe, to cleave the hard wood *Samì* with a leaf of the blue lotos. Let me retire behind this tree, that I may gaze on her charms without diminiſhing her confidence. *He retires.*

Sac. My friend *Priyamvadá* has tied this mantle of bark ſo cloſely over my boſom, that it gives me pain: *Anuſúyá*, I requeſt you to untie it.

Anuſúyá *unties the mantle.*

Pri. (laughing) Well, my ſweet friend, enjoy, while you may, that youthful prime, which gives your boſom ſo beautiful a ſwell.

Duſhm. (aſide) Admirably ſpoken, *Priyamvadá!* No; her charms cannot be hidden, even though a robe of intertwiſted fibres be thrown over her ſhoulders, and conceal a part of her boſom, like a veil of yellow leaves enfolding a radiant flower. The water-lily, though dark moſs may ſettle on its head, is nevertheleſs beautiful; and the moon with dewy beams is rendered yet brighter by its black ſpots. The bark itſelf acquires ele-

gance from the features of a girl with antelope's eyes, and rather augments, than diminiſhes, my ardour. Many are the rough ſtalks, which ſupport the water-lily; but many and exquiſite are the bloſſoms, which hang on them.

Sac. (looking before her) Yon *Amra* tree, my friends, points with the fingers of its leaves, which the gale gently agitates, and ſeems inclined to whiſper ſome ſecret. I will go near it.

They all approach the tree.

Pri. O my *Sacontalá*, let us remain ſome time in this ſhade.

Sac. Why here particularly?

Pri. Becauſe the *Amra* tree ſeems wedded to you, who are graceful as the blooming creeper, which twines round it.

Sac. Properly are you named *Priyamvadá*, or *Speaking-kindly*.

Duſhm (aſide) She ſpeaks truly. Yes; her lip glows like the tender leaflet; her arms reſemble two flexible ſtalks; and youthful beauty ſhines, like a bloſſom, in all her lineaments.

Anu. See, my *Sacontalá*, how yon freſh *Mallicà*, which you have ſurnamed *Vanadóſini*, or *Delight*

of the Grove, has chosen the sweet *Amra* for her bridegroom.

Sac. (approaching and looking at it with pleasure) How charming is the season, when the nuptials even of plants are thus publickly celebrated!

She stands admiring it.

Pri. (smiling) Do you know, my *Anusúyá*, why *Sacontalá* gazes on the plants with such rapture?

Anu. No, indeed: I was trying to guess. Pray, tell me.

Pri. "As the *Grove's Delight* is united to a "suitable tree, thus I too hope for a bridegroom "to my mind."—That is her private thought at this moment.

Sac. Such are the flights of your own imagination.

Inverting the water pot.

Anu. Here is a plant, *Sacontalá*, which you have forgotten, though it has grown up, like yourself, under the fostering care of our father *Canna*.

Sac. Then I shall forget myself.—O wonderful! *(approaching the plant.)* O *Priyamvadá!* *(looking at it with joy)* I have delightful tidings for you.

Pri. What tidings, my beloved, for me?

Sac. This *Mádhavi*-creeper, though it be not the uſual time for flowering, is covered with gay bloſſoms from its root to its top.

Both: (*approaching it haſtily*) Is it really ſo, ſweet friend?

Sac. Is it ſo? look yourſelves.

Pri. (*with eagerneſs*) From this omen, *Sacontalá*, I announce you an excellent huſband, who will very ſoon take you by the hand.

Both girls looking at Sacontalá.

Sac. (*diſpleaſed*) A ſtrange fancy of yours!

Pri. Indeed, my beloved, I ſpeak not jeſtingly. I heard ſomething from our father *Canna*. Your nurture of theſe plants has proſpered; and thence it is, that I foretel your approaching nuptials.

Anu. It is thence, my *Priyamvadá*, that ſhe has watered them with ſo much alacrity.

Sac. The *Mádhavi* plant is my ſiſter: can I do otherwiſe than cheriſh her?

Pouring water on it.

Duſhm. (*aſide*) I fear ſhe is of the ſame religious order with her foſter-father. Or has a miſtaken apprehenſion riſen in my mind? My warm heart is ſo attached to her, that ſhe cannot

but be a fit match for a man of the military claſs. The doubts, which awhile perplex the good, are ſoon removed by the prevalence of their ſtrong inclinations. I am enamoured of her; and ſhe cannot, therefore, be the daughter of a *Bráhmen*, whom I could not marry.

Sac. (moving her head) Alas! a bee has left the bloſſom of this *Mallicá*, and is flattering round my face. *She expreſſes uneaſineſs.*

Duſhm. (aſide with affection) How often have I ſeen our court-damſels affectedly turn their heads aſide from ſome roving inſect, merely to diſplay their graces! but this rural charmer knits her brows, and gracefully moves her eyes through fear only, without art or affectation. O happy bee, who toucheſt the corner of that eye beautifully trembling; who, approaching the tip of that ear, murmureſt as ſoftly as if thou wert whiſpering a ſecret of love; and who ſippeſt nectar, while ſhe waves her graceful hand, from that lip, which contains all the treaſures of delight! Whilſt I am ſolicitous to know in what family ſhe was born, thou art enjoying bliſs, which to me would be ſupreme felicity.

Sac. Diſengage me, I entreat, from this importunate inſect, which quite baffles my efforts.

Pri. What power have we to deliver you? The king *Duſhmanta* is the ſole defender of our conſecrated groves.

Duſhm. (aſide) This is a good occaſion for me to diſcover myſelf—*(advancing a little)* I muſt not, I will not, fear. Yet—*(checking himſelf and retiring)* my royal character will thus abruptly be known to them. No; I will appear as a ſimple ſtranger, and claim the duties of hoſpitality.

Sac. This impudent bee will not reſt. I will remove to another place. *(ſtepping aſide and looking round)* Away! away! He follows me wherever I go. Deliver me, oh! deliver me from this diſtreſs.

Duſhm. (advancing haſtily) Ah! While the race of *Puru* govern the world, and reſtrain even the moſt profligate by good laws well-adminiſtered, has any man the audacity to moleſt the lovely daughters of pious hermits? *They look at him with emotion.*

Anu. Sir, no man is here audacious; but this damſel, our beloved friend, was teaſed by a fluttering bee. *Both girls look at* Sacontalá.

Duſhm. (approaching her) Damſel, may thy devotion proſper!

Sacontalá *looks on the ground, baſhful and ſilent.*

Anu. Our gueſt muſt be received with due honours.

Pri. Stranger, you are welcome. Go, my *Sacontalá*; bring from the cottage a baſket of fruit and flowers. This river will in the mean time ſupply water for his feet. *Looking at the water pots.*

Duſhm. Holy maid, the gentleneſs of thy ſpeech does me ſufficient honour.

Anu. Sit down awhile on this bank of earth ſpread with the leaves of *Septaperna:* the ſhade is refreſhing, and our lord muſt want repoſe after his journey.

Duſhm. You too muſt all be fatigued by your hoſpitable attentions: reſt yourſelves, therefore, with me.

Pri. (aſide to Sacontalá) Come, let us all be ſeated: our gueſt is contented with our reception of him. *They all ſeat themſelves.*

Sac. (aſide) At the ſight of this youth I feel an emotion ſcarce conſiſtent with a grove devoted to piety.

Duſhm. (gazing at them alternately) How well your friendſhip agrees, holy damſels, with the charming equality of your ages and of your beauties!

Pri. (aſide to Anuſúyá*)* Who can this be, my *Anuſúyá?* The union of delicacy with robuſtneſs in his form, and of ſweetneſs with dignity in his diſcourſe, indicate a character fit for ample dominion.

Anu. (aſide to Priyamvadá*)* I too have been admiring him. I muſt aſk him a few queſtions. *(aloud)* Your ſweet ſpeech, ſir, gives me confidence. What imperial family is embelliſhed by our noble gueſt? What is his native country? Surely, it muſt be afflicted by his abſence from it. What, I pray, could induce you to humiliate that exalted form of yours by viſiting a foreſt peopled only by ſimple anchorites?

Sac. (aſide) Perplex not thyſelf, O my heart! let the faithful *Anuſúyá* direct with her counſel the thoughts, which riſe in thee.

Duſhm. (aſide) How ſhall I reveal, or how ſhall I diſguiſe, myſelf? *(muſing)* Be it ſo— *(aloud to* Anuſúyá*)* Excellent lady, I am a ſtudent

of the *Véda*, dwelling in the city of our king deſcended from *Puru*; and, being occupied in the diſcharge of religious and moral duties, am come hither to behold the ſanctuary of virtue.

Anu. Holy men, employed like you, are our lords and maſters.

Sacontalá *looks modeſt, yet with affection; while her companions gaze alternately at her and at the king.*

Anu. (*aſide to* Sacontalá) Oh! if our venerable father were preſent.———

Sac. What, if he were?

Anu. He would entertain our gueſt with a variety of refreſhments.

Sac. (*pretending diſpleaſure*) Go to; you had ſome other idea in your head: I will not liſten to you. *She ſits apart.*

Duſhm. (*aſide to* Anuſuyá *and* Priyamvadá) In my turn, holy damſels, allow me to aſk one queſtion concerning your lovely friend.

Both: The requeſt, ſir, does us honour.

Duſhm. The ſage *Canna*, I know, is ever intent upon the great Being; and muſt have declined all earthly connexions. How then can this damſel be, as it is ſaid, his daughter?

Anu. Let our lord hear. There is, in the family of *Cuſa*, a pious prince of extenſive power, eminent in devotion and in arms.

Duſhm. You ſpeak, no doubt, of *Cauſica*, the ſage and monarch.

Anu. Know, ſir, that he is in truth her father; while *Canna* bears that revered name, becauſe he brought her up, ſince ſhe was left an infant.

Duſhm. Left? the word excites my curioſity; and raiſes in me a deſire of knowing her whole ſtory.

Anu. You ſhall hear it, ſir, in few words. When that ſage king had begun to gather the fruits of his auſtere devotion, the gods of *Swerga* became apprehenſive of his encreaſing power, and ſent the nymph *Menacà* to fruſtrate by her allurements the full effect of his piety.

Duſhm. Is a mortal's piety ſo tremendous to the inferiour deities? What was the event?

Anu. In the bloom of the vernal ſeaſon *Cauſica*, beholding the beauty of the celeſtial nymph, and waſted by the gale of deſire—*(ſhe ſtops and looks modeſt)*

Duſhm. I now ſee the whole. *Sacontalá* then

is the daughter of a king by a nymph of the lower heaven.

Anu. Even ſo.

Duſhm. (aſide) The deſire of my heart is gratified. *(aloud)* How, indeed, could her tranſcendent beauty be the portion of mortal birth? Yon light, that ſparkles with tremulous beams, proceeds not from a terreſtrial cavern.

Sacontalá *ſits modeſtly with her eyes on the ground.*

Duſhm. (again aſide) Happy man that I am! Now has my fancy an ample range. Yet, having heard the pleaſantry of her companions on the ſubject of her nuptials, I am divided with anxious doubt, whether ſhe be not wholly deſtined for a religious life.

Pri. (ſmiling, and looking firſt at Sacontalá, *then at the king)* Our lord ſeems deſirous of aſking other queſtions.

Sacontalá *rebukes* Priyamvadá *with her hand.*

Duſhm. You know my very heart. I am, indeed, eager to learn the whole of this charmer's life; and muſt put one queſtion more.

Pri. Why ſhould you muſe on it ſo long? *(aſide)* One would think, this religious man was

forbidden by his vows to court a pretty woman.

Duſhm. This I aſk. Is the ſtrict rule of a hermit ſo far to be obſerved by *Canna*, that he cannot diſpoſe of his daughter in marriage, but muſt check the natural impulſe of juvenile love? Can ſhe (O prepoſterous fate!) be deſtined to reſide for life among her favourite antelopes, the black luſtre of whoſe eyes is far ſurpaſſed by hers?

Pri. Hitherto, ſir, our friend has lived happy in this conſecrated foreſt, the abode of her ſpiritual father; but it is now his intention to unite her with a bridegroom equal to herſelf.

Duſhm. (aſide with extaſy) Exult, O my heart, exult. All doubt is removed; and what before thou wouldſt have dreaded as a flame, may now be approached as a gem ineſtimable.

Sac. (ſeeming angry) Anuſúyá, I will ſtay here no longer.

Anu. Why ſo, I pray?

Sac. I will go to the holy matron *Gautamí*, and let her know how impertinently our *Priyamvadá* has been prattling. *She riſes.*

Anu. It will not be decent, my love, for an inhabitant of this hallowed wood to retire, be-

fore a gueſt has received complete honour.

Sacontalá, *giving no anſwer, offers to go.*

Duſhm. (aſide) Is ſhe then departing? *(He riſes, as if going to ſtop her, but checks himſelf)* The actions of a paſſionate lover are as precipitate, as his mind is agitated. Thus I, whoſe paſſion impelled me to follow the hermit's daughter, am reſtrained by a ſenſe of duty.

Pri. (going up to Sacontalá*)* My angry friend, you muſt not retire.

Sac. (ſtepping back and frowning) What ſhould detain me?

Pri. You owe me the labour, according to our agreement, of watering two more ſhrubs. Pay me firſt, to acquit your conſcience, and then depart, if you pleaſe. *Holding her.*

Duſhm. The damſel is fatigued, I imagine, by pouring ſo much water on the cheriſhed plants. Her arms, graced with palms like freſh bloſſoms, hang careleſſly down; her boſom heaves with ſtrong breathing; and now her diſhevelled locks, from which the ſtring has dropped, are held by one of her lovely hands. Suffer me, therefore, thus to diſcharge the debt. *(giving his ring to* Pri-

amvadá) *Both damſels, reading the name* DUSHMANTA, *inſcribed on the ring, look with ſurprize at each other.*

Duſhm. It is a toy unworthy of your fixed attention; but I value it as a gift from the king.

Pri. Then you ought not, ſir, to part with it. Her debt is from this moment dicharged on your word only. *She returns the ring.*

Anu. You are now releaſed, *Sacontalá*, by this benevolent lord—or favoured, perhaps, by a monarch himſelf. To what place will you now retire?

Sac. (aſide) Muſt I not wonder at all this, if I preſerve my ſenſes?

Pri. Are not you going, *Sacontalá*?

Sac. Am I your ſubject? I ſhall go when it pleaſes me.

Duſhm. (aſide, looking at Sacontalá) Either ſhe is affected towards me, as I am towards her, or I am diſtracted with joy. She mingles not her diſcourſe with mine; yet, when I ſpeak, ſhe liſtens attentively. She commands not her actions in my preſence; and her eyes are engaged on me alone.

Behind the ſcenes.) O pious hermits, preſerve the animals of this hallowed foreſt! The king *Duſhmanta* is hunting in it. The duſt raiſed by the hoofs of his horſes, which pound the pebbles ruddy as early dawn, falls like a ſwarm of blighting inſects on the conſecrated boughs, which ſuſtain your mantles of woven bark moiſt with the water of the ſtream, in which you have bathed.

Duſhm. (aſide) Alas! my officers, who are ſearching for me, have indiſcreetly diſturbed this holy retreat.

Again behind the ſcenes) Beware, ye hermits, of yon elephant, who comes overturning all that oppoſe him; now he fixes his trunk with violence on a lofty branch, that obſtructs his way; and now he is entangled in the twining ſtalks of the *Vratati*. How are our ſacred rites interrupted! How are the protected herds diſperſed! The wild elephant, alarmed at the new appearance of a car, lays our foreſt waſte.

Duſhm. (aſide) How unwillingly am I offending the devout foreſters! Yes; I muſt go to them inſtantly.

Pri. Noble ſtranger, we are confounded with

dread of the enraged elephant. With your permiſſion, therefore, we retire to the hermit's cottage.

Anu. O *Sacontalá*, the venerable matron will be much diſtreſſed on your account. Come quickly, that we may be all ſafe together.

Sac. (walking ſlowly) I am ſtopped, alas! by a ſudden pain in my ſide.

Duſhm. Be not alarmed, amiable damſels. It ſhall be my care, that no diſturbance happen in your ſacred groves.

Pri. Excellent ſtranger, we were wholly unacquainted with your ſtation; and you will forgive us, we hope, for the offence of intermitting awhile the honours due to you: but we humbly requeſt, that you will give us once more the pleaſure of ſeeing you, though you have not now been received with perfect hoſpitality.

Duſhm. You depreciate your own merits. The ſight of you, ſweet damſels, has ſufficiently honoured me.

Sac. My foot, O *Anuſúyá*, is hurt by this pointed blade of *Cuſa*-graſs; and now my looſe veſt of bark is caught by a branch of the *Curu-*

vaca. Help me to diſentangle myſelf, and ſupport me. *She goes out, looking from time to time at* Duſhmanta, *and ſupported by the damſels.*

Duſhm. (ſighing) They are all departed; and I too, alas! muſt depart. For how ſhort a moment have I been bleſſed with a ſight of the incomparable *Sacontalá!* I will ſend my attendants to the city, and take my ſtation at no great diſtance from this foreſt. I cannot in truth divert my mind from the ſweet occupation of gazing on her. How, indeed, ſhould I otherwiſe occupy it? My body moves onward; but my reſtleſs heart runs back to her; like a light flag borne on a ſtaff againſt the wind, and fluttering in an oppoſite direction. *He goes out.*

ACT II.

SCENE, a Plain, with royal pavilions on the ſkirt of the foreſt.

Mádhavya *ſighing and lamenting.*

Mádh. Strange recreation this! Ah me! I am wearied to death. My royal friend has an unaccountable taſte. What can I think of a king ſo paſſionately fond of chaſing unprofitable quadrupeds? "Here runs an antelope! there goes a boar!" Such is our only converſation. Even at noon, in exceſſive heat, when not a tree in the foreſt has a ſhadow under it, we muſt be ſkipping and prancing about like the beaſts, whom we follow. Are we thirſty? We have nothing to drink but the waters of mountain-torrents, which taſte of burned ſtones and mawkiſh leaves. Are we hungry? We muſt greedily devour lean veniſon, and that commonly roaſted to a ſtick. Have I a moment's repoſe at night? My ſlumber is diſturbed by the din of horſes and elephants, or by the ſons of ſlave-girls hallooing out, "mere

veniſon, more veniſon!" Then comes a cry that pierces my ear, "Away, to the foreſt, away!" Nor are theſe my only grievances: freſh pain is now added to the ſmart of my firſt wounds; for, while we were ſeparated from our king, who was chaſing a fooliſh deer, he entered, I find, yon lonely place, and there, to my infinite grief, ſaw a certain girl, called *Sacontalá*, the daughter of a hermit: from that moment not a word of returning to the city! Theſe diſtreſſing thoughts have kept my eyes open the whole night. Alas! When ſhall we return? I cannot ſet eyes on my beloved friend *Duſhmanta*, ſince he ſet his heart on taking another wife. *(ſtepping aſide and looking)* Oh! there he is. How changed! He carries a bow, indeed, but wears for his diadem a garland of wood-flowers. He is advancing: I muſt begin my operations.—*He ſtands leaning on a ſtaff. (aloud)* Let me thus take a moment's reſt.

Duſhmanta *enters, as deſcribed.*

Duſhm. (aſide, ſighing) My darling is not ſo eaſily attainable; yet my heart aſſumes confidence from the manner, in which ſhe ſeemed affected;

ſurely, though our love has not hitherto proſpered, yet the inclinations of us both are fixed on our union. *(ſmiling)* Thus do lovers agreeably beguile themſelves, when all the powers of their ſouls are intent on the objects of their deſire! But am I beguiled? No; when ſhe caſt her eyes even on her companions, they ſparkled with tenderneſs: when ſhe moved her graceful arms, they dropped, as if languid with love; when her friend remonſtrated againſt her departure, ſhe ſpoke angrily—All this was, no doubt, on my account. Oh! how quick-ſighted is love in diſcerning his own advantages!

Mádh. (bending downward, as before) Great prince! my hands are unable to move; and it is with my lips only, that I can mutter a bleſſing on you. May the king be victorious!

Duſhm. (looking at him and ſmiling) Ah! what has crippled thee, friend *Mádhavya?*

Mádh. You ſtrike my eye with your own hand, and then aſk what makes it weep.

Duſhm. Speak intelligibly. I know not what you mean.

Mádh. Look at yon *Vítas*-tree bent double in

the river. Is it crooked I pray, by its own act, or by the force of the ſtream?

Duſhm. It is bent, I ſuppoſe, by the current.

Mádh. So am I by Your Majeſty.

Duſhm. How ſo, *Mádhavya?*

Mádh. Does it become you, I pray, to leave the great affairs of your empire, and ſo charming a manſion as your palace, for the ſake of living here like a foreſter? Can you hold a council in a wood? I, who am a reverend *Bráhmen*, have no longer the uſe of my hands and feet: they are put out of joint by my running all day long after dogs and wild beaſts. Favour me, I entreat, with your permiſſion to repoſe but a ſingle day.

Duſhm. (aſide) Such are this poor fellow's complaints; whilſt I, when I think of *Canna's* daughter, have as little reliſh for hunting as he. How can I brace this bow, and fix a ſhaft in the ſtring, to ſhoot at thoſe beautiful deer, who dwell in the ſame groves with my beloved, and whoſe eyes derive luſtre from hers?

Mádh. (*looking ſtedfaſtly at the king*) What ſcheme is your royal mind contriving? I have been crying, I find, in a wilderneſs.

Dúſhm. I think of nothing but the gratification of my old friend's wiſhes.

Mádh. (*joyfully*) Then may the king live long!

Riſing, but counterfeiting feebleneſs.

Duſhm. Stay; and liſten to me attentively.

Mádh. Let the king command.

Duſhm. When you have taken repoſe, I ſhall want your aſſiſtance in another buſineſs, that will give you no fatigue.

Mádh. Oh! what can that be, unleſs it be eating rice-pudding?

Duſhm. You ſhall know in due time.

Mádh. I ſhall be delighted to hear it.

Duſhm. Hola! who is there?

The Chamberlain *enters.*

Cham. Let my ſovereign command me.

Duſhm. Raivataca, bid the General attend.

Cham. I obey—(*he goes out, and returns with the General*) Come quickly, ſir: the king ſtands expecting you.

Gen. (*aſide, looking at* Duſhmanta) How comes it, that hunting, which moraliſts reckon a vice,

ſhould be a virtue in the eyes of a king? Thence it no doubt, that our Emperor, occupied in perpetual toil, and enured to conſtant heat, is become ſo lean, that the ſunbeams hardly affect him; while he is ſo tall, that he looks to us little men, like an elephant grazing on a mountain: he ſeems all ſoul. *(aloud approaching the king)* May our monarch ever be victorious! This foreſt, O king, is infeſted by beaſts of prey: we ſee the traces of their huge feet in every path. What orders is it your pleaſure to give?

Duſhm. Bhadraſena, this moralizing *Mádhavya* has put a ſtop to our recreation by forbidding the pleaſures of the chaſe.

Gen. (aſide to Mádhavya) Be firm to your word, my friend; whilſt I found the king's real inclinations. *(aloud)* Oh! ſir, the fool talks idly. Conſider the delights of hunting. The body, it is true, becomes emaciated, but it is light and fit for exerciſe. Mark, how the wild beaſts of various kinds are variouſly affected by fear and by rage! What pleaſure equals that of a proud archer, when his arrow hits the mark, as it flies? Can hunting be juſtly called a vice?

No recreation, ſurely, can be compared with it.

Mádh. (angrily) Away, thou falſe flatterer! The king, indeed, follows his natural bent, and is excuſable; but thou, ſon of a ſlave girl, haſt no excuſe. Away to the wood! How I wiſh thou hadſt been ſeized by a tiger or an old bear, who was prowling for a ſhakal, like thyſelf!

Duſhm. We are now, *Bhadraſena*, encamped near a ſacred hermitage; and I cannot at preſent applaud your panegyrick on hunting. This day, therefore, let the wild buffalos roll undiſturbed in the ſhallow water, or toſs up the ſand with their horns; let the herd of antelopes, aſſembled under the thick ſhade, ruminate without fear; let the large boars root up the herbage on the brink of yon pool; and let this my bow take repoſe with a ſlackened ſtring.

Gen. As our lord commands.

Duſhm. Recall the archers, who have advanced before me, and forbid the officers to go very far from this hallowed grove. Let them beware of irritating the pious: holy men are eminent for patient virtues, yet conceal within their boſoms a ſcorching flame; as carbuncles are naturally cool

to the touch; but, if the rays of the ſun have been imbibed by them, they burn the hand.

Mádh. Away now, and triumph on the delights of hunting.

Gen. The king's orders are obeyed. *He goes out.*

Duſhm. (to his attendants) Put off your hunting-apparel; and thou, *Raivataca*, continue in waiting at a little diſtance.

Cham. I ſhall obey. *Goes out.*

Mádh. So; you have cleared the ſtage: not even a fly is left on it. Sit down, I pray, on this pavement of ſmooth pebbles, and the ſhade of this tree ſhall be your canopy: I will ſit by you; for I am impatient to know what will give me no fatigue.

Duſhm. Go firſt, and ſeat thyſelf.

Mádh. Come, my royal friend.

They both ſit under a tree.

Duſhm. Friend *Mádhavya*, your eyes have not been gratified with an object, which beſt deſerves to be ſeen.

Madh. Yes, truly; for a king is before them.

Duſhm. All men are apt, indeed, to think favourably of themſelves; but I meant *Sacontalá*,

the brighteſt ornament of theſe woods.

Mádh. *(aſide)* I muſt not foment his paſſion, *(aloud)* What can you gain by ſeeing her? She is a *Bráhmen*'s daughter, and conſequently no match for you!

Duſhm. What? Do people gaze at the new moon, with uplifted heads and fixed eyes, from a hope of poſſeſſing it? But you muſt know, that the heart of *Duſhmanta* is not fixed on an object, which he muſt for ever deſpair of attaining.

Mádh. Tell me how.

Duſhm. She is the daughter of a pious prince and warriour by a celeſtial nymph; and, her mother having left her on earth, ſhe has been foſtered by *Canna*, even as a freſh bloſſom of *Malati*, which droops on its pendent ſtalk, is raiſed and expanded by the ſun's light.

Mádh. *(laughing)* Your deſire to poſſeſs this ruſtick girl, when you have women bright as gems in your palace already, is like the fancy of a man, who has loſt his reliſh for dates, and longs for the four tamarind.

Duſhm. Did you know her, you would not talk ſo wildly.

Madh. Oh! certainly, whatever a king admires muſt be ſuperlatively charming.

Duſhm. (ſmiling) What need is there of long deſcription? When I meditate on the power of *Brahmà*, and on her lineaments, the creation of ſo tranſcendent a jewel outſhines in my apprehenſion all his other works: ſhe was formed and moulded in the eternal mind, which had raiſed with its utmoſt exertion the ideas of perfect ſhapes, and thence made an aſſemblage of all abſtract beauties.

Madh. She muſt render then all other handſome women contemptible.

Duſhm. In my mind ſhe really does. I know not yet what bleſſed inhabitant of this world will be the poſſeſſor of that faultleſs beauty, which now reſembles a bloſſom, whoſe fragrance has not been diffuſed; a freſh leaf, which no hand has torn from its ſtalk; a pure diamond, which no poliſher has handled; new honey, whoſe ſweetneſs is yet untaſted; or rather the celeſtial fruit of collected virtues, to the perfection of which nothing can be added.

Madh. Make haſte then, or the fruit of all

virtues will drop into the hand of ſome devout ruſtick, whoſe hair ſhines with oil of *Ingudî*.

Duſhm. She is not her own miſtreſs; and her foſter-father is at a diſtance.

Mádh. How is ſhe diſpoſed towards you?

Duſhm. My friend, the damſels in a hermit's family are naturally reſerved: yet ſhe did look at me, wiſhing to be unperceived; then ſhe ſmiled, and ſtarted a new ſubject of converſation. Love is by nature averſe to a ſudden communication, and hitherto neither fully diſplays nor wholly conceals himſelf in her demeanour towards me.

Mádh. (laughing) Has ſhe thus taken poſſeſſion of your heart on ſo tranſient a view?

Duſhm. When ſhe walked about with her female friends, I ſaw her yet more diſtinctly, and my paſſion was greatly augmented. She ſaid ſweetly, but untruly, "My foot is hurt by the points of the *Cuſa*-graſs:" then ſhe ſtopped; but ſoon, advancing a few paces, turned back her face, pretending a wiſh to diſentangle her veſt of woven bark from the branches, in which it had not really been caught.

Mádh. You began with chaſing an antelope,

and have now ſtarted new game: thence it is, I preſume, that you are grown ſo fond of a conſecrated foreſt.

Duſhm. Now the buſineſs for you, which I mentioned, is this: you, who are a *Bráhmen*, muſt find ſome expedient for my ſecond entrance into that aſylum of virtue.

Mádh. And the advice, which I give, is this. Remember that you are a king.

Duſhm. What then?

Mádh. "Hola! bid the hermits bring my "*ſixth* part of their grain." Say this, and enter the grove without ſcruple.

Duſhm. No, *Mádhavya:* they pay a different tribute, who, having abandoned all the gems and gold of this world, poſſeſs riches far ſuperiour. The wealth of princes, collected from the four orders of their ſubjects, is periſhable; but pious men give us a *ſixth* part of the fruits of their piety; fruits, which will never periſh.

Behind the ſcenes) Happy men that we are! we have now attained the object of our deſire.

Duſhm. Hah! I hear the voices of ſome religious anchorites.

The Chamberlain *enters.*

Cham. May the king be victorious! Two young men, ſons of a hermit, are waiting at my ſtation and ſoliciting an audience.

Duſhm. Introduce them without delay.

Cham. As the king commands.

He goes out, and re-enters with two Bráhmens.

Cham. Come on, come this way.

Firſt *Bráhm.* *(looking at the king)* Oh! what confidence is inſpired by his brilliant appearance! Or proceeds it rather from his diſpoſition to virtue and holineſs? Whence comes it, that my fear vaniſhes? He now has taken his abode in a wood, which ſupplies us with every enjoyment; and, with all his exertions for our ſafety, his devotion increaſes from day to day. The praiſe of a monarch, who has conquered his paſſions, aſcends even to heaven: inſpired bards are continually ſinging "behold a virtuous prince!" but with us the royal name ſtands firſt: "behold, among kings, a ſage!"

Second *Bráhm.* Is this, my friend, the truly

virtuous *Duſhmanta?*

First *Bráhm.* Even He.

Second *Bráhm.* It is not then wonderful, that He alone, whoſe arm is lofty and ſtrong as the main bar of his city-gate, poſſeſſes the whole earth, which forms a dark boundary to the ocean; or that the gods of *Swerga*, who fiercely contend in battle with evil powers, proclaim victory gained by his braced bow, not by the thunderbolt of *INDRA.*

Both: (approaching him) O king, be victorious!

Duſhm. (riſing) I humbly ſalute you both.

Both: Bleſſings on thee!

Duſhm. (reſpectfully) May I know the cauſe of this viſit?

First *Bráhm.* Our ſovereign is hailed by the pious inhabitants of theſe woods; and they implore.

Duſhm. What is their command?

First *Bráhm.* In the abſence of our ſpiritual guide *Canna*, ſome evil demons are diſturbing our holy retreat. Deign, therefore, accompanied by thy charioteer, to be maſter of our aſylum, if it be only for a few ſhort days.

Duſhm. (eagerly) I am highly favoured by your

invitation.

Mádh. (*aſide*) Excellent promoters of your deſign! They draw you by the neck, but not againſt your will.

Duſhm. *Raivataca*, bid my charioteer bring my car, with my bow and quiver.

Cham. I obey. *He goes out.*

Firſt *Bráhm.* Such condeſcenſion well becomes thee, who art an univerſal guardian.

Second *Bráhm.* Thus do the deſcendents of *Puru* perform their engagement to deliver their ſubjects from fear of danger.

Duſhm. Go firſt, holy men: I will follow inſtantly.

Both: Be ever victorious! *They go out.*

Duſhm. Shall you not be delighted, friend *Mádhavya*, to ſee my *Sacontalà*?

Mádh. At firſt I ſhould have had no objection; but I have a conſiderable one ſince the ſtory of the demons.

Duſhm. Oh! fear nothing: you will be near me.

Mádh. And you, I hope, will have leiſure to protect me from them.

The Chamberlain *re-enters.*

Cham. May our lord be victorious! The imperial car is ready; and all are expecting your triumphant approach. *Carabha* too, a meſſenger from the queen-mother, is juſt arrived from the city.

Duſhm. Is he really come from the venerable queen?

Cham. There can be no doubt of it.

Duſhm. Let him appear before me.

The Chamberlain *goes out, and returns with the* Meſſenger.

Cham. There ſtands the king, O *Carabha:* approach him with reverence.

Meſſ. (proſtrating himſelf) May the king be ever victorious! The royal Mother ſends this meſſage.

Duſhm. Declare her command.

Meſſ. Four days hence the uſual faſt *for the advancement of her ſon* will be kept with ſolemnity; and the preſence of the king (may his life be prolonged!) will then be required.

Duſhm. On one hand is a commiſſion from holy *Bráhmens*; on the other, a command from

my revered parent: both duties are ſacred, and neither muſt be neglected.

Mádh. (laughing) Stay ſuſpended between them both, like king *Triſancu* between heaven and earth; when the pious men ſaid, "riſe!" and the Gods of *Swerga* ſaid, "fall!"

Duſhm. In truth I am greatly perplexed. My mind is principally diſtracted by the diſtance of the two places, where the two duties are to be performed; as the ſtream of a river is divided by rocks in the middle of its bed. *(muſing)* Friend *Mádhavya*, my mother brought you up as her own ſon, to be my playfellow and to divert me in my childhood. You may very properly act my part in the queen's devotions. Return then to the city, and give an account of my diſtreſs through the commiſſion of theſe reverend foreſters.

Mádh. That I will; but you could not really ſuppoſe, that I was afraid of demons.

Duſhm. How come you, who are an egregious *Bráhmen*, to be ſo bold on a ſudden?

Mádh. Oh! I am now a young king.

Duſhm. Yes, certainly; and I will diſpatch my whole train to attend your highneſs, whilſt I put

an end to the diſturbance in this hermitage.

Mádh. (ſtrutting) See, I am a prince regnant.

Duſhm. (aſide) This buffoon of a *Bráhmen* has a ſlippery genius. He will perhaps diſcloſe my preſent purſuit to the women in the palace. I muſt try to deceive him.

Taking Mádhavya *by the hand.*

Duſhm. I ſhall enter the foreſt, be aſſured, only through reſpect for its pious inhabitants; not from any inclination for the daughter of a hermit. How far am I raiſed above a girl educated among antelopes; a girl, whoſe heart muſt ever be a ſtranger to love! The tale was invented for my diverſion.

Mábh. Yes, to be ſure; only for your diverſion!

Duſhm. Then farewel, my friend; execute my commiſſion faithfully, whilſt I proceed—— to defend the anchorites. *All go out.*

ACT III.

SCENE, the Hermitage in a Grove.

The Hermit's Pupil bearing conſecrated graſs.

Pup. (meditating with wonder) How great is the power of *Duſhmanta!* The monarch and his charioteer had no ſooner entered the grove, than we continued our holy rites without interruption. What words can deſcribe him? By his barely aiming a ſhaft, by the mere ſound of his bow-ſtring, by the ſimple murmur of his vibrating bow, he diſperſes at once our calamities. Now then I deliver to the prieſts this bundle of freſh *Cuſa*-graſs to be ſcattered round the place of ſacrifice. *(looking behind the ſcenes)* Ah! *Priyamvadá*, for whom are you carrying that ointment of *Uſíra*-root, and thoſe leaves of water-lilies? *(liſtening attentively)* What ſay you? That *Sacontalá* is extremely diſordered by the ſun's heat, and that you have procured for her a cooling medicine! Let her, my *Priyamvadá*, be diligently attended; for ſhe is the darling of our venerable father *Canna*. I will ad-

minister, by the hand of *Gautamí*, some healing water consecrated in the ceremony called *Vaitána*.

He goes out.

Dushmanta *enters, expressing the distraction of a lover.*

Dushm. I well know the power of her devotion: that she will suffer none to dispose of her but *Canna*, I too well know. Yet my heart can no more return to its former placid state, than water can reascend the steep, down which it has fallen. O God of Love, how can thy darts be so keen, since they are pointed with flowers? Yes, I discover the reason of their keenness. They are tipped with the flames, which the wrath of *Hara* kindled, and which blaze at this moment, like the *Bádava*-fire under the waves: how else couldst thou, who wast consumed even to ashes, be still the inflamer of our souls? By thee and by the moon, though each of you seems worthy of confidence, we lovers are cruelly deceived. They, who love as I do, ascribe flowery shafts to thee, and cool beams to the moon, with equal impro-

propriety; for the moon ſheds fire on them with her dewy rays, and thou pointeſt with ſharp diamonds thoſe arrows, which ſeem to be barbed with bloſſoms. Yet this God, who bears a fiſh on his banners, and who wounds me to the ſoul, will give me real delight, if he deſtroy me with the aid of my beloved, whoſe eyes are large and beautiful as thoſe of a roe. O powerful divinity, even when I thus adore thy attributes, haſt thou no compaſſion? Thy fire, O Love, is fanned into a blaze by a hundred of my vain thoughts. Does it become thee to draw thy bow even to thy ear, that the ſhaft, aimed at my boſom, may inflict a deeper wound? Where now can I recreate my afflicted ſoul by the permiſſion of thoſe pious men, whoſe uneaſineſs I have removed by diſmiſſing my train? *(ſighing)* I can have no relief, but from a ſight of my beloved. *(looking up)* This intenſely hot noon muſt, no doubt, be paſſed by *Sacontalá* with her damſels on the banks of this river overſhadowed with *Tamálas*. It muſt be ſo: I will advance thither. *(walking round and looking)* My ſweet friend has, I gueſs, been lately walking under that row of young trees; for I ſee

the ſtalks of ſome flowers, which probably ſhe gathered, ſtill unſhrivelled; and ſome freſh leaves, newly plucked, ſtill dropping milk. *(feeling a breeze)* Ah! this bank has a delightful air! Here may the gale embrace me, wafting odours from the water-lilies, and cool my breaſt, inflamed by the bodileſs God, with the liquid particles, which it catches from the waves of the *Mâlinì*. *(looking down)* Happy lover! *Sacontalá* muſt be ſomewhere in this grove of flowering creepers; for I diſcern on the yellow ſand at the door of yon arbour ſome recent footſteps, raiſed a little before, and depreſſed behind by the weight of her elegant limbs. I ſhall have a better view from behind this thick foliage. *(he conceals himſelf, looking vigilantly)* Now are my eyes fully gratified. The darling of my heart, with her two faithful attendants, repoſes on a ſmooth rock ſtrown with freſh flowers. Theſe branches will hide me, whilſt I hear their charming converſation.

He ſtands concealed, and gazing.

Sacontalà *and her two* Damſels *diſcovered.*

Both: (fanning her) Say, beloved *Sacontalá,* does the breeze, raiſed by our fans of broad lotos-leaves, refreſh you?

Sac. (mournfully) Why, alas, do my dear friends take this trouble?

Both look ſorrowfully at each other.

Duſhm. (aſide) Ah! ſhe ſeems much indiſpoſed. What can have been the fatal cauſe of ſo violent a fever? Is it what my heart ſuggeſts? Or——— *(muſing)* I am perplexed with doubts. The medicine, extracted from the balmy *uſira,* has been applied, I ſee, to her boſom: her only bracelet is made of thin filaments from the ſtalks of a water-lily, and even that is looſely bound on her arm. Yet, even thus diſordered, ſhe is exquiſitely beautiful. Such are the hearts of the young! Love and the ſun equally inflame us; but the ſcorching heat of ſummer leads not equally to happineſs with the ardour of youthful deſires.

Pri. (aſide to Anuſuyá) Did you not obſerve, how the heart of *Sacontalá* was affected by the firſt

ſight of our pious monarch? My ſuſpicion is, that her malady has no other cauſe.

Anu. *(aſide to* Priyamvadá) The ſame ſuſpicion had riſen in my mind. I will aſk her at once. *(aloud)* My ſweet *Sacontalá*, let me put one queſtion to you. What has really occaſioned your indiſpoſition?

Duſhm. *(aſide)* She muſt now declare it. Ah! though her bracelets of lotos are bright as moon-beams, yet they are marked, I ſee, with black ſpots from internal ardour.

Sac. *(half-raiſing herſelf)* Oh! ſay, what you ſuſpect to have occaſioned it.

Anu. *Sacontalá*, we muſt neceſſarily be ignorant of what is paſſing in your breaſt; but I ſuſpect your caſe to be that, which we have often heard related in tales of love. Tell us openly, what cauſes your illneſs. A phyſician, without knowing the cauſe of a diſorder, cannot even begin to apply a remedy.

Duſhm. *(aſide)* I flatter myſelf with the ſame ſuſpicion.

Sac. *(aſide)* My pain is intolerable; yet I cannot haſtily diſcloſe the occaſion of it.

Pri. My ſweet friend, *Anuſúyà* ſpeaks rationally. Conſider the violence of your indiſpoſition. Every day you will be more and more emaciated, though your exquiſite beauty has not yet forſaken you.

Duſhm. (aſide) Moſt true. Her forehead is parched; her neck droops; her waiſt is more ſlender than before; her ſhoulders languidly fall; her complexion is wan; ſhe reſembles a *Mádhaví*-creeper, whoſe leaves are dried by a ſultry gale: yet, even thus transformed, ſhe is lovely, and charms my ſoul.

Sac. (ſighing) What more can I ſay? Ah! why ſhould I be the occaſion of your ſorrow?

Pri. For that very reaſon, my beloved, we are ſolicitous to know your ſecret; ſince, when each of us has a ſhare of your uneaſineſs, you will bear more eaſily your own portion of it.

Duſhm. (aſide) Thus urged by two friends, who ſhare her pains as well as her pleaſures, ſhe cannot fail to diſcloſe the hidden cauſe of her malady; whilſt I, on whom ſhe looked at our firſt interview with marked affection, am filled with anxious deſire to hear her anſwer.

Sac. From the very inſtant, when the accompliſhed prince, who has juſt given repoſe to our hallowed foreſt, met my eye——*She breaks off, and looks modeſt.*

Both: Speak on, beloved *Sacontalá.*

Sac. From that inſtant my affection was unalterably fixed on him—and thence I am reduced to my preſent languor.

Anu. Fortunately your affection is placed on a man worthy of yourſelf.

Pri. Oh! could a fine river have deſerted the ſea, and flowed into a lake?

Duſhm. (joyfully) That, which I was eager to know, her own lips have told. Love was the cauſe of my diſtemper, and love has healed it; as a ſummer's day, grown black with clouds, relieves all animals from the heat, which itſelf had cauſed.

Sac. If it be no diſagreeable taſk, contrive, I entreat you, ſome means, by which I may find favour in the king's eyes.

Duſhm. (aſide) That requeſt baniſhes all my cares, and gives me rapture even in my preſent uneaſy ſituation.

Pri. (aſide to Anuſúyá) A remedy for her, my friend, will ſcarce be attainable. Exert all the powers of your mind; for her illneſs admits of no delay.

Anu. (aſide to Priyamvadá) By what expedient can her cure be both accelerated and kept ſecret?

Pri. (as before) Oh! to keep it ſecret, will be eaſy; but to attain it ſoon, almoſt inſuperably difficult.

Anu. (as before) How ſo?

Pri. The young king ſeemed, I admit, by his tender glances, to be enamoured of her at firſt ſight; and he has been obſerved, within theſe few days, to be pale and thin, as if his paſſion had kept him long awake.

Duſhm. (aſide) So it has—This golden bracelet, ſullied by the flame, which preys on me, and which no dew mitigates, but the tears guſhing nightly from theſe eyes, has fallen again and again on my wriſt, and has been replaced on my emaciated arm.

Pri. (aloud) I have a thought, *Anuſúyá*—let us write a love-letter, which I will conceal in a flower, and, under the pretext of making a re-

ſpectful offering, deliver it myſelf into the king's hand.

Anu. An excellent contrivance! It pleaſes me highly; but what ſays our beloved *Sacontalá?*

Sac. I muſt conſider, my friend, the poſſible conſequences of ſuch a ſtep.

Pri. Think alſo of a verſe or two, which may ſuit your paſſion, and be conſiſtent with the character of a lovely girl born in an exalted family.

Sac. I will think of them in due time; but my heart flutters with the apprehenſion of being rejected.

Duſhm. (aſide) Here ſtands the man ſupremely bleſſed in thy preſence, from whom, O timid girl, thou art apprehenſive of a refuſal! Here ſtands the man, from whom, O beautiful maid, thou feareſt rejection, though he loves thee diſtractedly. He, who ſhall poſſeſs thee, will ſeek no brighter gem; and thou art the gem, which I am eager to poſſeſs.

Anu. You depreciate, *Sacontalá*, your own incomparable merits. What man in his ſenſes would intercept with an umbrella the moonlight

of autumn, which alone can allay the fever caused by the heat of the noon?

Sac. (ſmiling) I am engaged in thought.

She meditates.

Duſhm. Thus then I fix my eyes on the lovely poeteſs, without cloſing them a moment, while ſhe meaſures the feet of her verſe: her forehead is gracefully moved in cadence, and her whole aſpect indicates pure affection.

Sac. I have thought of a couplet; but we have no writing-implements.

Pri. Let us hear the words; and then I will mark them with my nail on this lotos-leaf ſoft and green as the breaſt of a young perroquet: it may eaſily be cut into the form of a letter. Repeat the verſes.

Sac. "Thy heart, indeed, I know not: but "mine, O cruel, love warms by day and by "night; and all my faculties are centred on "thee."

Duſhm. (haſtily advancing, and pronouncing a verſe in the ſame meaſure.) "Thee, O ſlender maid, love "only warms; but me he burns; as the day-"ſtar only ſtifles the fragrance of the night-flow-

"er, but quenches the very orb of the moon."

Anu. (looking at him joyfully) Welcome, great king: the fruit of my friend's imagination has ripened without delay.

Sacontalá *expreſſes an inclination to riſe.*

Duſhm. Give yourſelf no pain. Thoſe delicate limbs, which repoſe on a couch of flowers, thoſe arms, whoſe bracelets of lotos are diſarranged by a ſlight preſſure, and that ſweet frame, which the hot noon ſeems to have diſordered, muſt not be fatigued by ceremony.

Sac. (aſide) O my heart, canſt thou not reſt at length after all thy ſuffering?

Anu. Let our ſovereign take for his ſeat a part of the rock, on which ſhe repoſes.

Sacontalá *makes a little room.*

Duſhm. (ſeating himſelf) Priyamvadá, is not the fever of your charming friend in ſome degree abated?

Pri. (ſmiling) She has juſt taken a ſalutary medicine, and will ſoon be reſtored to health. But, O mighty prince, as I am favoured by you and by her, my friendſhip for *Sacontalá* prompts me to converſe with you for a few moments.

Duſhm. Excellent damſel, ſpeak openly; and ſuppreſs nothing.

Pri. Our lord ſhall hear.

Duſhm. I am attentive.

Pri. By diſpelling the alarms of our pious hermits, you have diſcharged the duty of a great monarch.

Duſhm. Oh! talk a little on other ſubjects.

Pri. Then I muſt inform you, that our beloved companion is enamoured of you, and has been reduced to her preſent languor by the reſiſtleſs divinity, Love. You only can preſerve her ineſtimable life.

Duſhm. Sweet *Priyamvadá*, our paſſion is reciprocal; but it is I, who am honoured.

Sac. (ſmiling, with a mixture of affection and reſentment) Why ſhould you detain the virtuous monarch, who muſt be afflicted by ſo long an abſence from the ſecret apartments of his palace?

Duſhm. This heart of mine, O thou who art of all things the deareſt to it, will have no object but thee, whoſe eyes enchant me with their black ſplendour, if thou wilt but ſpeak in a milder ſtrain. I, who was nearly ſlain by love's arrow,

am deſtroyed by thy ſpeech.

Anu. (laughing) Princes are ſaid to have many favourite conſorts. You muſt aſſure us, therefore, that our beloved friend ſhall not be expoſed to affliction through our conduct.

Duſhm. What need is there of many words? Let there be ever ſo many women in my palace, I will have only two objects of perfect regard; the ſea-girt earth, which I govern, and your ſweet friend, whom I love.

Both: Our anxiety is diſſipated.

Saconta'á *ſtrives in vain to conceal her joy.*

Pri. (aſide to Anúſuyá) See, how our friend recovers her ſpirits by little and little, as the peahen, oppreſſed by the ſummer heat, is refreſhed by a ſoft gale and a gentle ſhower.

Sac. (to the damſels) Forgive, I pray, my offence in having uſed unmeaning words: they were uttered only for your amuſement in return for your tender care of me.

Pri. They were the occaſion, indeed, of our ſerious advice. But it is the king, who muſt forgive: who elſe is offended?

Sac. The great monarch will, I truſt, excuſe

what has been ſaid either before him or in his abſence. *(aſide to the damſels)* Intercede with him, I entreat you.

Duſhm. (ſmiling) I would cheerfully forgive any offence, lovely *Sacontalá*, if you, who have dominion over my heart, would allow me full room to ſit by you, and recover my fatigue, on this flowery couch preſſed by your delicate limbs.

Pri. Allow him room; it will appeaſe him, and make him happy.

Sac. (pretending anger, aſide to Priyamvadá) Be quiet, thou miſchief-making girl! Doſt thou ſport with me in my preſent weak ſtate?

Anu. (looking behind the ſcenes) Oh! my *Priyamvadá*, there is our favourite young antelope running wildly and turning his eyes on all ſides: he is, no doubt, ſeeking his mother, who has rambled in the wide foreſt. I muſt go, and aſſiſt his ſearch.

Pri. He is very nimble; and you alone will never be able to confine him in one place. I muſt accompany you. *Both going out.*

Sac. Alas! I cannot conſent to your going far: I ſhall be left alone.

Both: *(ſmiling)* Alone! with the ſovereign of the world by your ſide! *They go out.*

Sac. How could my companions both leave me?

Duſhm. Sweet maid, give yourſelf no concern. Am not I, who humbly ſolicit your favour, preſent in the room of them? *(aſide)* I muſt declare my paſſion.—*(aloud)* Why ſhould not I, like them, wave this fan of lotos-leaves, to raiſe cool breezes and diſſipate your uneaſineſs? Why ſhould not I, like them, lay ſoftly in my lap thoſe feet red as water-lilies, and preſs them, O my charmer, to relieve your pain?

Sac. I ſhould offend againſt myſelf, by receiving homage from a perſon entitled to my reſpect.

She riſes, and walks ſlowly through weakneſs.

Duſhm. The noon, my love, is not yet paſſed; and your ſweet limbs are weak. Having left that couch, where freſh flowers covered your boſom, you can ill ſuſtain this intenſe heat with ſo languid a frame. *He gently draws her back.*

Sac. Leave me, oh! leave me. I am not, indeed, my own miſtreſs, or——the two damſels were only appointed to attend me. What can I do at preſent?

Duſhm. *(aſide)* Fear of diſpleaſing her makes me baſhful.

Sac. *(overhearing him)* The king cannot give offence. It is my unhappy fate only, that I accuſe.

Duſhm. Why ſhould you accuſe ſo favourable a deſtiny?

Sac. How rather can I help blaming it, ſince it has permitted my heart to be affected by amiable qualities, without having left me at my own diſpoſal?

Duſhm. *(aſide)* One would imagine, that the charming ſex, inſtead of being, like us, tormented with love, kept love himſelf within their hearts, to torment him with delay. Sacontalá *going out.*

Duſhm. *(aſide)* How! muſt I then fail of attaining felicity?

Following her and catching the ſkirt of her mantle.

Sac. *(turning back)* Son of *Puru*, preſerve thy reaſon; oh! preſerve it. The hermits are buſy on all ſides of the grove.

Duſhm. My charmer, your fear of them is vain. *Canna* himſelf, who is deeply verſed in the ſcience of law, will be no obſtacle to our union. Many daughters of the holieſt men have

been married by the ceremony called *gándharva*, as it is practiced by *Indra's* band, and even their fathers have approved them. *(looking round)* What say you? Are you ſtill inflexible? Alas! I muſt then depart.

Going from her a few paces, then looking back.

Sac. (moving alſo a few ſteps, and then turning back her face) Though I have refuſed compliance, and have only allowed you to converſe with me for a moment, yet, O ſon of *Puru*—let not *Sacontalá* be wholly forgotten.

Duſhm. Enchanting girl, ſhould you be removed to the ends of the world, you will be fixed in this heart, as the ſhade of a lofty tree remains with it, even when the day is departed.

Sac. (going out, aſide) Since I have heard his proteſtations, my feet move, indeed, but without advancing. I will conceal myſelf behind thoſe flowering *Curuvaca's*, and thence I ſhall ſee the reſult of his paſſion.

She hides herſelf behind the ſhrubs.

Duſhm. (aſide) Can you leave me, beloved *Sacontalá*, me, who am all affection? Could you not have tarried a ſingle moment? Soft is your

beautiful frame, and indicates a benevolent ſoul; yet your heart is obdurate: as the tender *Siríſha* hangs on a hard ſtalk.

Sac. (aſide) I really have now loſt the power of departing.

Duſhm. (aſide) What can I do in this retreat, ſince my darling has left it? *(muſing and looking round)* Ah! my departure is happily delayed. Here lies her bracelet of flowers, exquiſitely perfumed by the root of *ſíura*, which had been ſpread on her boſom: it has fallen from her delicate wriſt, and is become a new chain for my heart. *Taking up the bracelet with reverence.*

Sac. (aſide, looking at her hand) Ah me! ſuch was my languor, that the filaments of lotos-ſtalks which bound my arm, dropped on the ground unperceived by me.

Duſhm. (aſide, placing it in his boſom) Oh! how delightful to the touch! From this ornament of your lovely arm, O my darling, though it be inanimate and ſenſeleſs, your unhappy lover has regained confidence—a bliſs, which you refuſed to confer.

Sac. (aſide) I can ſtay here no longer. By

this pretext I may return.

Going ſlowly towards him.

Duſhm. (with rapture) Ah! the empreſs of my ſoul again bleſſes theſe eyes. After all my miſery I was deſtined to be favoured by indulgent heaven. The bird *Châtac*, whoſe throat was parched with thirſt, ſupplicated for a drop of water, and ſuddenly a cool ſtream poured into his bill from the bounty of a freſh cloud.

Sac. Mighty king, when I had gone half way to the cottage, I perceived that my bracelet of thin ſtalks had fallen from my wriſt; and I return, becauſe my heart is almoſt convinced, that you muſt have ſeen and taken it. Reſtore it, I humbly entreat, leſt you expoſe both yourſelf and me to the cenſure of the hermits.

Duſhm. Yes, on one condition, I will return it.

Sac. On what condition? Speak——

Duſhm. That I may replace it on the wriſt, to which it belongs.

Sac. (aſide) I have no alternative.

Approaching him

Duſhm. But, in order to replace it, we muſt both be ſeated on that ſmooth rock. *Both ſit down.*

Duſhm. (taking her hand) O exquiſite ſoftneſs! This hand has regained its native ſtrength and beauty, like a young ſhoot of *cámalatà*: or it reſembles rather the God of Love himſelf, when, having been conſumed by the fire of *Hara's* wrath, he was reſtored to life by a ſhower of nectar ſprinkled by the immortals.

Sac. (preſſing his hand) Let the ſon of my lord make haſte to tie on the bracelet.

Duſhm. (aſide with rapture) Now I am truly bleſſed. That phraſe *the ſon of my lord* is applied only to a huſband. *(aloud)* My charmer, the claſp of this bracelet is not eaſily looſened: muſt be made to fit you better.

Sac. (ſmiling) As you pleaſe.

Duſhm. (quitting her hand) Look, my darling: this is the new moon, which left the firmament in honour of ſuperiour beauty, and, having deſcended on your enchanting wriſt, has joined both its horns round it in the ſhape of a bracelet.

Sac. I really ſee nothing like a moon: the breeze, I ſuppoſe, has ſhaken ſome duſt from the lotos-flower behind my ears, and that has obſcured my ſight.

Duſhm. (ſmiling) If you permit me, I will blow the fragrant duſt from your eye.

Sac. It would be a kindneſs; but I cannot truſt you.

Duſhm. Oh! fear not, fear not. A new ſervant never tranſgreſſes the command of his miſtreſs.

Sac. But a ſervant over-aſſiduous deſerves no confidence.

Duſhm. (aſide) I will not let ſlip this charming occaſion. *Attempting to raiſe her head.*

Sacontalá *faintly repels him, but ſits ſtill.*

Duſhm. O damſel with an antelope's eyes, be not apprehenſive of my indiſcretion.

Sacontalá *looks up for a moment, and then baſhfully drops her head.*

Duſhm. (aſide, raiſing her head) That lip, the ſoftneſs of which is imagined, not proved, ſeems to pronounce, with a delightful tremour, its permiſſion for me to allay my thirſt.

Sac. The ſon of my lord ſeems inclined to break his promiſe.

Duſhm. Beloved, I was deceived by the proximity of the lotos to that eye, which equals it in

brightneſs. *He blows gently on her eye.*

Sac. Well; now I ſee a prince, who keeps his word, as it becomes his imperial character. Yet I am really aſhamed, that no deſert of mine entitles me to the kind ſervice of my lord's ſon.

Duſhm. What reward can I deſire, except that which I conſider as the greateſt, the fragrance of your delicious lip?

Sac. Will that content you?

Duſhm. The bee is contented with the mere odour of the water-lily.

Sac. If he were not, he would get no remedy.

Duſhm. Yes, this and this——

Kiſſing her eagerly.

Behind the ſcenes. Hark! the *Chacraváca* is calling her mate on the bank of the *Málinì:* the night is beginning to ſpread her ſhades.

Sac. (liſtening alarmed) O ſon of my lord, the matron *Gautamì* approaches to inquire after my health. Hide yourſelf, I entreat, behind yon trees.

Duſhm. I yield to neceſſity. *He retires.*

Gautamì *enters with a vaſe in her hand.*

Gaut. (looking anxiouſly at Sacontalá) My child, here is holy water for thee. What! haſt thou no companion here, but the inviſible gods; thou, who art ſo much indiſpoſed?

Sac. Both *Priyamvadá* and *Anuſúyà* are juſt gone down to the river.

Gaut. (ſprinkling her) Is thy fever, my child, a little abated? *Feeling her hand.*

Sac. Venerable matron, there is a change for the better.

Gaut. Then thou art in no danger. Mayſt thou live many years! The day is departing: let us both go to the cottage.

Sac. (aſide, riſing ſlowly) O my heart, no ſooner hadſt thou begun to taſte happineſs, than the occaſion ſlipped away! *She advances a few ſteps, and returns to the arbour.*

Sac. O bower of twining plants, by whom my ſorrows have been diſpelled, on thee I call; ardently hoping to be once more happy under thy ſhade. *She goes out with* Gautamì.

Duſhm. (returning to the bower, and ſighing) How, alas, have my deſires been obſtructed! Could I do leſs than kiſs the lips of my charmer, though her modeſt cheeks were half-averted; lips, whoſe ſweetneſs had enchanted me, even when they pronounced a denial? Whither now can I go? I will remain awhile in this arbour of creepers, which my darling's preſence has illuminated. *(looking round)* Yes; this is her ſeat on the rock ſpread with bloſſoms, which have been preſſed by her delicate limbs. Here lies her exquiſite love-letter on the leaf of a water-lily; here lay her bracelet of tender filaments, which had fallen from her ſweet wriſt. Though the bower of twining *Vetaſa's* be now deſolate, ſince my charmer has left it, yet, while my eyes are fixed on all theſe delightful memorials of her, I am unable to depart. *(muſing)* Ah! how imperfectly has this affair been conducted by a lover, like me, who, with his darling by his ſide, has let the occaſion ſlip. Should *Sacontalá* viſit once more this calm retreat, the opportunity ſhall not paſs again unimproved: the pleaſures of youth are by nature tranſitory. Thus my fooliſh

heart forms resolutions; while it is distracted by the sudden interruption of its happiness. Why did it ever allow me to quit without effect the presence of my beloved?

Behind the scenes. O king, while we are beginning our evening-sacrifice, the figures of blood-thirsty demons, imbrowned by clouds collected at the departure of day, glide over the sacred hearth, and spread consternation around.

Dushm. Fear not, holy men. Your king will protect you. *He goes out.*

ACT IV.

SCENE, a Lawn before the Cottage.

The two Damſels are diſcovered gathering flowers.

Anu. O my *Priyamvadá*, though our ſweet friend has been happily married, according to the rites of *Ganaharva's*, to a bridegroom equal in rank and accompliſhments, yet my affectionate heart is not wholly free from care; and one doubt gives me particular uneaſineſs.

Pri. What doubt, my *Anuſúyà*?

Anu. This morning the pious prince was diſmiſſed with gratitude by our hermits, who had then completed their myſtick rites: he is now gone to his capital, *Haſtináputa*, where, ſurrounded by a hundred women in the receſſes of his palace, it may be doubted whether he will remember his charming bride.

Pri. In that reſpect you may be quite eaſy. Men, ſo well-informed and well-educated as he, can never be utterly deſtitute of honour. We have another thing to conſider. When our father *Canna* ſhall return from his pilgrimage, and

ſhall hear what has paſſed, I cannot tell how he may receive the intelligence.

Anu. If you aſk my opinion, he will, I think, approve of the marriage.

Pri. Why do you think ſo?

Anu. Becauſe he could deſire nothing better, than that a huſband ſo accompliſhed and ſo exalted ſhould take *Sacontalá* by the hand. It was, you know, the declared object of his heart, that ſhe might be ſuitably married; and, ſince heaven has done for him what he moſt wiſhed to do, how can he poſſibly be diſſatisfied?

Pri. You reaſon well; but——— *(looking at her baſket)* My friend, we have plucked a ſufficient ſtore of flowers to ſcatter over the place of ſacrifice.

Anu. Let us gather more, to decorate the temples of the goddeſſes, who have procured for *Sacontalá* ſo much good fortune.

They both gather more flowers.

Behind the ſcenes. It is I —— Hola!

Anu. (liſtening) I hear the voice, as it ſeems, of a gueſt arrived in the hermitage.

Pri. Let us haſten thither. *Sacontalá* is now

repoſing; but, though we may, when ſhe wakes, enjoy her preſence, yet her mind will all day be abſent with her departed lord.

Anu. Be it ſo; but we have occaſion, you know, for all theſe flowers. *They advance.*

Again behind the ſcenes. How! Doſt thou ſhow no attention to a gueſt? Then hear my imprecation.

——— "He, on whom thou art meditating, on "whom alone thy heart is now fixed, while thou "neglecteſt a pure gem of devotion, who de- "mands hoſpitality, ſhall forget thee, when thou "feeſt him next, as a man, reſtored to ſobriety, "forgets the words, which he uttered in a ſtate "of intoxication."

Both damſels look at each other with affliction.

Pri. Wo is me! Dreadful calamity! Our beloved friend has, through mere abſence of mind, provoked by her neglect ſome holy man, who expected reverence.

Anu. (looking) It muſt be ſo; for the choleriek *Durvaſas* is going haſtily back.

Pri. Who elſe has power to conſume, like raging fire, whatever offends him? Go, my *Anuſuya*, fall at his feet, and perſuade him, if poſſible, to

return: in the mean time I will prepare water and refreſhments for him.

Anu. I go with eagerneſs. *She goes out.*

Priyamvadá *advancing haſtily, her foot ſlips.*

Pri. Ah! through my eager haſte I have let the baſket fall; and my religious duties muſt not be poſtponed.

She gathers freſh flowers. Anuſúyá *re-enters.*

Anu. His wrath, my beloved, paſſes all bounds. Who living could now appeaſe him by the humbleſt proſtrations or entreaties? Yet at laſt he a little relented.

Pri. That little is a great deal for him. But inform me, how you ſoothed him in any degree.

Anu. When he poſitively refuſed to come back, I threw myſelf at his feet and thus addreſſed him: "Holy ſage, forgive, I entreat, the "offence of an amiable girl, who has the higheſt "veneration for you, but was ignorant through "diſtraction of mind, how exalted a perſonage "was calling to her."

Pri. What then? What ſaid he?

Anu. He thus anſwered: "My word muſt not "be recalled; but the ſpell, which it has raiſed,

"shall be wholly removed, when her lord shall "see his ring." Saying this, he disappeared.

Pri. We may now have confidence; for, before the monarch departed, he fixed with his own hand on the finger of *Sacontalá* the ring, on which we saw the name *DUSHMANTA* engraved, and which he will instantly recognize. On him therefore alone will depend the remedy for our misfortune.

Anu. Come; let us now proceed to the shrines of the goddesses, and implore their succour.

Both advance.

Pri. (looking) See, my *Anusúyá*, where our beloved friend sits, motionless as a picture, supporting her languid head with her left hand. With a mind so intent on one object, she can pay no attention to herself, much less to a stranger.

Anu. Let the horrid imprecation, *Priyamvadá*, remain a secret between us two: we must spare the feelings of our beloved, who is naturally susceptible of quick emotions.

Pri. Who would pour boiling water on the blossom of a tender *Mallica?* *Both go out.*

A Pupil *of* Canna *enters.*

Pup. I am ordered by the venerable *Canna*, who is returned from the place of his pilgrimage, to obſerve the time of the night, and am, therefore, come forth to ſee how much remains of it.

Walking round and obſerving the heavens.

On one ſide the moon, who kindles the flowers of the *Oſhadhì*, has nearly ſunk in his weſtern bed; and, on the other, the ſun, ſeated behind his charioteer *Arun*, is beginning his courſe: the luſtre of them both is conſpicuous, when they riſe and when they ſet; and, by their example, ſhould men be equally firm in proſperous and in adverſe fortune. The moon has now diſappeared, and the night-flower pleaſes no more: it leaves only a remembrance of its odour, and languiſhes like a tender bride, whoſe pain is intolerable in the abſence of her beloved. The ruddy morn impurples the dew-drops on the branches of yonder *Vadarí*; the peacock, ſhaking off ſleep, haſtens from the cottages of hermits interwoven with holy graſs; and yonder antelope, ſpringing haſtily

from the place of ſacrifice, which is marked with his hoofs, raiſes himſelf on high, and ſtretches his graceful limbs. How is the moon fallen from the ſky with diminiſhed beams; the moon, who had ſet his foot on the head of *Sumérú*, king of mountains, and had climbed, ſcattering the rear of darkneſs, even to the central palace of *Viſhnu!* Thus do the great men of this world aſcend with extreme labour to the ſummit of ambition, but eaſily and quickly deſcend from it.

Anuſúyá *enters meditating.*

Anu. *(aſide)* Such has been the affection of *Sacontalá*, though ſhe was bred in auſtere devotion, averſe from ſenſual enjoyments! How unkind was the king to leave her!

Pup. *(aſide)* The proper time is come for performing the *hóma:* I muſt apprize our preceptor of it. *He goes out.*

Anu. The ſhades of night are diſperſed; and I am hardly awake; but, were I ever ſo perfectly in my ſenſes, what could I now do? My hands move not readily to the uſual occupations of the

morning. Let the blame be caſt on love, on love only, by whom our friend has been reduced to her preſent condition through a monarch, who has broken his word. Or does the imprecation of *Durváſas* already prevail? How elſe could a virtuous king, who made ſo ſolemn an engagement, have ſuffered ſo long a time to elapſe without ſending even a meſſage? Shall we convey the fatal ring to Him? Or what expedient can be ſuggeſted for the relief of this incomparable girl, who mourns without ceaſing? Yet what fault has She committed? With all my zeal for her happineſs, I cannot ſummon courage enough to inform our father *Canna*, that ſhe is pregnant. What then, oh! what ſtep can I take, to relieve her anxiety?

Priyamvadá *enters.*

Pri. Come, *Anuſúyá*, come quickly. They are making ſuitable preparations for conducting *Sacontalá* to her huſband's palace.

Anu. (*with ſurpriſe*) What ſay you, my friend?

Pri. Hear me. I went juſt now to *Sacontalá*,

meaning only to aſk, if ſhe had ſlept well.——

Anu. What then? oh! what then?

Pri. She was ſitting with her head bent on her knee, when our father *Canna*, entering her apartment, embraced and congratulated her. "My "ſweet child," ſaid he, "there has been a happy "omen: the young *Bráhmen*, who officiated in "our morning ſacrifice, though his ſight was "impeded by clouds of ſmoke, dropped the cla-"rified butter into the very centre of the adora-"ble flame. Now, ſince the pious act of my "pupil has proſpered, my foſter-child muſt not "be ſuffered any longer to languiſh in ſorrow; "and this day I am determined to ſend thee from "the cottage of the old hermit, who bred thee "up, to the palace of the monarch, who has "taken thee by the hand."

Anu. My friend, who told *Canna* what paſſed in his abſence?

Pri. When he entered the palace, where the holy fire was blazing, he heard a voice from heaven pronouncing divine meaſures.——

Anu. (amazed) Ah! you aſtoniſh me.

Pri. Hear the celeſtial verſe: "Know, that thy

" adopted daughter, O pious *Bráhmen*, has re-
" ceived from *Duſhmanta* a ray of glory deſtined
" to rule the world; as the wood *ſamì* becomes
" pregnant with myſterious fire."

Anu. (*embracing* Priyamvadá) I am delighted, my beloved; I am tranſported with joy. But—ſince they mean to deprive us of our friend ſo ſoon as to-day, I feel that my delight is at leaſt equalled by my ſorrow.

Pri. Oh! we muſt ſubmit patiently to the anguiſh of parting. Our beloved friend will now be happy; and that ſhould conſole us.

Anu. Let us now make haſte to dreſs her in bridal array. I have already, for that purpoſe, filled the ſhell of a cocoa-nut, which you ſee fixed on an *Amra*-tree, with the fragrant duſt of *Nágacéſara's*: take it down, and keep it in a freſh lotos-leaf, whilſt I collect ſome *gorácsana* from the forehead of a ſacred cow, ſome earth from conſecrated ground, and ſome freſh *cuſa*-graſs, of which I will make a paſte to enſure good fortune.

Pri. By all means. *She takes down the perfume.*

Anuſúyá *goes out.*

Behind the ſcenes. O *Gautamì*, bid the two *Miſ-*

ra's, Sárngarava and *Sáradwata*, make ready to accompany my child *Sacontalá*.

Pri. (*liſtening*) Loſe no time, *Anusúyá*, loſe no time. Our father *Canna* is giving orders for the intended journey to *Haſtináp ura*.

Anusúyá *re-enters with the ingredients of her charm.*

Anu. I am here: let us go, my *Priyamvadà*.

They both advance.

Pri. (*looking*) There ſtands our *Sacontalá*, after her bath at ſunriſe, while many holy women, who are congratulating her, carry baſkets of hallowed grain. Let us haſten to greet her.

Enter Sacontalá, Gautamì, and *female Hermits.*

Sac. I proſtrate myſelf before the goddeſs.

Gaut. My child, thou canſt not pronounce too often the word *goddeſs*: thus wilt thou procure great felicity for thy lord.

Herm. Mayſt thou, O royal bride, be delivered of a Hero! *The Hermits go out.*

Both Damſels: (*approaching* Sacontalá) Beloved

friend, was your bath pleaſant?

Sac. Oh! my friends, you are welcome: let us ſit awhile together. *They ſeat themſelves.*

Anu. Now you muſt be patient, whilſt I bind on a charm to ſecure your happineſs.

Sac. That is kind. Much has been decided this day; and the pleaſure of being thus attended by my ſweet friends will not ſoon return.

Wiping off her tears.

Pri. Beloved, it is unbecoming to weep at a time, when you are going to be ſo happy.

Both damſels burſt into tears, as they dreſs her.

Pri. Your elegant perſon deſerves richer apparel: it is now decorated with ſuch rude flowers, as we could procure in this foreſt.

Canna's *Pupil enters with rich clothes.*

Pup. Here is a complete dreſs. Let the queen wear it auſpiciouſly; and may her life be long!

The women look with aſtoniſhment.

Gaut. My ſon *Hárita*, whence came this apparel?

Pup. From the devotion of our father *Canna.*

Gaut. What doſt thou mean?

Pup. Be attentive. The venerable ſage gave this order: "Bring freſh flowers for *Saconta'lá* "from the moſt beautiful trees;" and ſuddenly the woodnymphs appeared, raiſing their hands, which rivalled new leaves in beauty and ſoftneſs. Some of them wove a lower mantle bright as the moon, the preſage of her felicity; another preſſed the juice of *Lácſha* to ſtain her feet exquiſitely red; the reſt were buſied in forming the gayeſt ornaments; and they eagerly ſhowered their gifts on us.

Pri. (*looking at* Saconta'lá) Thus it is, that even the bee, whoſe neſt is within the hollow trunk, does homage to the honey of the lotos-flower.

Gaut. The nymphs muſt have been commiſſioned by the goddeſs of the king's fortune, to predict the acceſſion of brighter ornaments in his palace. Saconta'lá *looks modeſt.*

Pup. I muſt haſten to *Canna*, who is gone to bathe in the *Málini*, and let him know the ſignal kindneſs of the woodnymphs. *He goes out.*

Anu. My ſweet friend, I little expected ſo ſplendid a dreſs: how ſhall I adjuſt it properly?

(conſidering) Oh! my ſkill in painting will ſupply me with ſome hints; and I will diſpoſe the drapery according to art.

Sac. I well know your affection for me.

Canna *enters meditating.*

Can. (aſide) This day muſt *Sacontalá* depart: that is reſolved; yet my ſoul is ſmitten with anguiſh. My ſpeech is interrupted by a torrent of tears, which my reaſon ſuppreſſes and turns inward: my very ſight is dimmed. Strange, that the affliction of a foreſter, retired from the haunts of men, ſhould be ſo exceſſive! Oh; with what pangs muſt they, who are fathers of families, be afflicted on the departure of a daughter! *He walks round muſing.*

Pri. Now, my *Sacontalá*, you are becomingly decorated: put on this lower veſt, the gift of ſylvan goddeſſes.

Sacontalá *riſes and puts on the mantle.*

Gaut. My child, thy ſpiritual father, whoſe eyes overflow with tears of joy, ſtands deſiring to embrace thee. Haſten, therefore, to do him reverence. Sacontalá *modeſtly bows to him.*

Can. Mayſt thou be cheriſhed by thy huſband, as *Sarmiſhthà* was cheriſhed by *Yayáti!* Mayſt thou bring forth a Sovereign of the world, as ſhe brought forth *Puru!*

Gaut. This, my child, is not a mere benediction: it is a boon actually conferred.

Can. My beſt beloved, come and walk with me round the ſacrificial fire. *They all advance.*

Can. May theſe fires preſerve thee! fires, which ſpring to their appointed ſtations on the holy hearth, and conſume the conſecrated wood, while the freſh blades of myſterious *cuſa* lie ſcattered around them! Sacramental fires, which deſtroy ſin with the riſing fumes of clarified butter!

Sacontalá *walks with ſolemnity round the hearth.*

Can. Now ſet out, my darling, on thy auſpicious journey. *(looking round)* Where are the attendants, the two *Miſras*?

Enter Sárngarava *and* Sáradwata.

Both: Holy ſage, we are here.

Can. My ſon *Sárngarava*, ſhow thy ſiſter her way.

Sárn. Come, damſel—— *They all advance.*

Can. Hear, O ye trees of this hallowed foreſt; ye trees, in which the ſylvan goddeſſes have their abode; hear, and proclaim, that *Sacontalá* is going to the palace of her wedded lord; ſhe, who drank not, though thirſty, before you were watered; ſhe, who cropped not, through affection for you, one of your freſh leaves, though ſhe would have been pleaſed with ſuch an ornament for her locks; ſhe, whoſe chief delight was in the ſeaſon when your branches are ſpangled with flowers! *Chorus of inviſible Wood-nymphs.*

May her way be attended with proſperity! May propitious breezes ſprinkle, for her delight, the odoriferous duſt of rich bloſſoms! May pools of clear water, green with the leaves of the lotos, refreſh her, as ſhe walks! and may ſhady branches be her defence from the ſcorching ſunbeams! *All liſten with admiration.*

Sárn. Was that the voice of the *Cécila* wiſhing a happy journey to *Sacontalá*? Or did the nymphs, who are allied to the pious inhabitants of theſe woods, repeat the warbling of the muſical bird, and make its greeting their own?

Gaut. Daughter, the ſylvan goddeſſes, who love their kindred hermits, have wiſhed you proſperity, and are entitled to humble thanks.

Sacontalá *walks round, bowing to the Nymphs.*

Sac. (aſide to Priyamvadá) Delighted as I am, O *Priyamvadá*, with the thought of ſeeing again the ſon of my lord, yet, on leaving this grove, my early aſylum, I am ſcarce able to walk.

Pri. You lament not alone. Mark the affliction of the foreſt itſelf, when the time of your departure approaches! The female antelope browſes no more on the collected *cuſa*-graſs; and the peahen ceaſes to dance on the lawn: the very plants of the grove, whoſe pale leaves fall on the ground, loſe their ſtrength and their beauty.

Sac. Venerable father, ſuffer me to addreſs this *Mádhaví*-creeper, whoſe red bloſſoms inflame the grove.

Can. My child, I know thy affection for it.

Sac. (embracing the plant) O moſt radiant of twining plants, receive my embraces, and return them with thy flexible arms: from this day,

though removed to a fatal diſtance, I ſhall for ever be thine. O beloved father, conſider this creeper as myſelf.

Can. My darling, thy amiable qualities have gained thee a huſband equal to thyſelf: ſuch an event has been long, for thy ſake, the chief object of my heart; and now, ſince my ſolicitude for thy marriage is at an end, I will marry thy favourite plant to the bridegroom *Amra*, who ſheds fragrance near her. Proceed, my child, on thy journey.

Sac. (approaching the two damſels) Sweet friends, let this *Mádhavi*-creeper be a precious depoſit in your hands.

Anu. } Alas! in whoſe care ſhall we be left?
Pri. }

They both weep.

Can. Tears are vain, *Anuſúyá*: our *Sacontalá* ought rather to be ſupported by your firmneſs, than weakened by your weeping. *All advance.*

Sac. Father! when yon female antelope, who now moves ſlowly from the weight of the young ones, with which ſhe is pregnant, ſhall be delivered of them, ſend me, I beg, a kind meſſage with

tidings of her ſafety. Do not forget it.

Can. My beloved, I will not forget it.

Sac. (*advancing, then ſtopping*) Ah! what is it that clings to the ſkirts of my robe, and detains me? *She turns round, and looks.*

Can. It is thy adopted child, the little fawn, whoſe mouth, when the ſharp points of *cuſa*-graſs had wounded it, has been ſo often ſmeared by thy hand with the healing oil of *Ingudì*; who has been ſo often fed by thee with a handful of *Syámáca*-grains, and now will not leave the footſteps of his protectreſs.

Sac. Why doſt thou weep, tender fawn, for me, who muſt leave our common dwelling-place? As thou waſt reared by me, when thou hadſt loſt thy mother, who died ſoon after thy birth, ſo will my foſter-father attend thee, when we are ſeparated, with anxious care. Return, poor thing, return—we muſt part.

She burſts into tears.

Can. Thy tears, my child, ill ſuit the occaſion: we ſhall all meet again: be firm: ſee the direct road before thee, and follow it. When the big tear lurks beneath thy beautiful eyelaſhes, let thy

reſolution check its firſt efforts to diſengage itſelf. In thy paſſage over this earth, where the paths are now high, now low, and the true path ſeldom diſtinguiſhed, the traces of thy feet muſt needs be unequal; but virtue will preſs thee right onward.

Sárn. It is a ſacred rule, holy ſage, that *a benevolent man ſhould accompany a traveller, till he meet with abundance of water*; and that rule you have carefully obſerved: we are now near the brink of a large pool. Give us, therefore, your commands, and return.

Can. Let us reſt awhile under the ſhade of this *Vata*-tree. *They all go to the ſhade.*

Can. What meſſage can I ſend with propriety to the noble *Duſhmanta?* *He meditates.*

Anu. (*aſide to* Sacontalá) My beloved friend, every heart in our aſylum is fixed on you alone, and all are afflicted by your departure. Look; the bird *Chacravácа*, called by his mate, who is almoſt hidden by water-lilies, gives her no anſwer; but, having dropped from his bill the fibres of lotos-ſtalks, which he had plucked, gazes on you with inexpreſſible tenderneſs.

Can. My ſon *Sárngarava*, remember, when thou ſhalt preſent *Sacontalá* to the king, to addreſs him thus in my name: "Conſidering us hermits "as virtuous, indeed, but rich only in devotion, "and conſidering alſo thy own exalted birth, "retain thy love for this girl, which aroſe in thy "boſom without any interference of her kin- "dred; and look on her among thy wives with "the ſame kindneſs, which they experience: "more than that cannot be demanded; ſince "particular affection muſt depend on the will "of heaven."

Sárn. Your meſſage, venerable man, is deeply rooted in my remembrance.

Can. (*looking tenderly at* Sacontalá). Now, my darling, thou too muſt be gently admoniſhed. We, who are humble foreſters, are yet acquainted with the world, which we have forſaken.

Sárn. Nothing can be unknown to the wiſe.

Can. Hear, my daughter. When thou art ſettled in the manſion of thy huſband, ſhow due reverence to Him, and to thoſe, whom he reveres: though he have other wives, be rather an affectionate hand-maid to them than a rival.

Should he diſpleaſe thee, let not thy reſentment lead thee to diſobedience. In thy conduct to thy domeſticks be rigidly juſt and impartial; and ſeek not eagerly thy own gratifications. By ſuch behaviour young women become reſpectable; but perverſe wives are the bane of a family. What thinks *Gautamí* of this leſſon?

Gaut. It is incomparable: my child, be ſure to remember it.

Can. Come, my beloved girl, give a parting embrace to me and to thy tender companions.

Sac. Muſt *Anuſúyá* and *Priyamvadá* return to the hermitage?

Can. They too, my child, muſt be ſuitably married; and it would not be proper for them yet to viſit the city; but *Gautamí* will accompany thee.

Sac. (embracing him). Removed from the boſom of my father, like a young ſandal-tree rent from the hills of *Malaya,* how ſhall I exiſt in a ſtrange ſoil?

Can. Be not ſo anxious. When thou ſhalt be miſtreſs of a family, and conſort of a king, thou mayſt, indeed, be occaſionally perplexed

by the intricate affairs, which ariſe from exuberance of wealth, but wilt then think lightly of this tranſient affliction, eſpecially when thou ſhalt have a *ſon* (and a ſon thou wilt have) bright as the riſing day-ſtar. Know alſo with certainty, that the body muſt neceſſarily, at the appointed moment, be ſeparated from the ſoul: who then can be immoderately afflicted, when the weaker bonds of extrinſick relations are looſened, or even broken?

Sac. (falling at his feet) My father, I thus humbly declare my veneration for you.

Can. Excellent girl, may my effort for thy happineſs prove ſucceſsful!

Sac. (approaching her two companions) Come then, my beloved friends, embrace me together.

They embrace her.

Anu. My friend, if the virtuous monarch ſhould not at once recollect you, only ſhow him the ring, on which his own name is engraved.

Sac. (ſtarting) My heart flutters at the bare apprehenſion, which you have raiſed.

Pri. Fear not, ſweet *Sacontalá:* love always raiſes ideas of miſery, which are ſeldom or never realized.

Sárn. Holy ſage, the ſun has riſen to a conſiderable height: let the queen haſten her departure.

Sac. (again embracing Canna) When, my father, oh! when again ſhall I behold this aſylum of virtue?

Can. Daughter, when thou ſhalt long have been wedded, like this fruitful earth, to the pious monarch, and ſhalt have borne him a ſon, whoſe car ſhall be matchleſs in battle, thy lord ſhall transfer to him the burden of empire, and thou, with thy *Duſhmanta*, ſhalt again ſeek tranquillity, before thy final departure, in this loved and conſecrated grove.

Gaut. My child, the proper time for our journey paſſes away rapidly: ſuffer thy father to return. Go, venerable man, go back to thy manſion, from which ſhe is doomed to be ſo long abſent.

Can. Sweet child, this delay interrupts my religious duties.

Sac. You, my father, will perform them long without ſorrow; but I, alas! am deſtined to bear affliction.

Can. Oh! my daughter, compel me not to neglect my daily devotions. *(ſighing)* No, my ſorrow will not be diminiſhed. Can it ceaſe, my beloved, when the plants which riſe luxuriantly from the hallowed grains, which thy hand has ſtrown before my cottage, are continually in my ſight? Go, may thy journey proſper!

Sacontalá *goes out with* Gautamì *and the two* Miſras.

Both Damſels: (looking after Sacontalá *with anguiſh.)* Alas! alas! our beloved is hidden by the thick trees.

Can. My children, ſince your friend is at length departed, check your immoderate grief, and follow me. *They all turn back.*

Both: Holy father, the grove will be a perfect vacuity without *Sacontalá.*

Can. Your affection will certainly give it that appearance. *He walks round meditating.*

Can. Ah me!—Yes; at laſt my weak mind has attained its due firmneſs after the departure of my *Sacontalá.* In truth a daughter muſt ſoon-

er or later be the property of another; and, having now ſent her to her lord, I find my ſoul clear and undiſturbed, like that of a man, who has reſtored to its owner an ineſtimable depoſit, which he long had kept with ſolicitude.

They go out.

ACT V.

SCENE, *the Palace.*

An old Chamberlain ſighing.

Cham. Alas! what a decrepit old age have I attained? This wand, which I firſt held for the diſcharge of my cuſtomary duties in the ſecret apartments of my prince, is now my ſupport, whilſt I walk feebly through the multitude of years, which I have paſſed. I muſt now mention to the king, as he goes through the palace, an event, which concerns himſelf: it muſt not be delayed. *(advancing ſlowly)* What is it? Oh! I recollect: the devout pupils of *Canna* deſire an audience. How ſtrange a thing is human life! The intellects of an old man ſeem at one time luminous, and then on a ſudden are involved in darkneſs, like the flame of a lamp at the point of extinction. *(he walks round and looks)* There is *Duſhmanta:* he has been attending to his people, as to his own family; and now with a tranquil heart ſeeks a ſolitary chamber; as an elephant, the chief of his herd, having grazed the whole

morning, and being heated by the meridian ſun, repairs to a cool ſtation during the oppreſſive heats. Since the king is juſt riſen from his tribunal, and muſt be fatigued, I am almoſt afraid to inform him at preſent, that *Canna*'s pupils are arrived: yet how ſhould they, who ſupport nations, enjoy reſt? The ſun yokes his bright ſteeds for the labour of many hours; the gale breathes by night and by day; the prince of ſerpents continually ſuſtains the weight of this earth; and equally inceſſant is the toil of that man, whoſe revenue ariſes from a ſixth part of his people's income. *He walks about.*

Enter Duſhmanta, Mádhavya, *and attendants.*

Duſhm. (looking oppreſſed with buſineſs) Every petitioner, having attained juſtice, is departed happy; but kings, who perform their duties conſcientiouſly, are afflicted without end. The anxiety of acquiring dominion gives extreme pain; and, when it is firmly eſtabliſhed, the cares of ſupporting the nation inceſſantly haraſs the ſovereign; as a large umbrella, of which a

man carries the ſtaff in his own hand, fatigues, while it ſhades, him.

Behind the ſcenes. May the king be victorious!

Two Bards repeat ſtanzas.

Firſt Bard: Thou ſeekeſt not thy own pleaſure: no; it is for the people, that thou art haraſſed from day to day. Such, when thou waſt created, was the diſpoſition implanted in thy ſoul! Thus a branchy tree bears on his head the ſcorching ſun-beams, while his broad ſhade allays the fever of thoſe, who ſeek ſhelter under him.

Second Bard: When thou wieldeſt the rod of juſtice, thou bringeſt to order all thoſe, who have deviated from the path of virtue: thou biddeſt contention ceaſe: thou waſt formed for the preſervation of thy people: thy kindred poſſeſs, indeed, conſiderable wealth; but ſo boundleſs is thy affection, that all thy ſubjects are conſidered by thee as thy kinſmen.

Duſhm. (liſtening) That ſweet poetry refreſhes me after the toil of giving judgements and publick orders.

Mádh. Yes; as a tired bull is refreſhed, when the people ſay, "There goes the lord of cattle."

Duſhm. *(ſmiling)* Oh! art thou here, my friend: let us take our ſeats together. *The king and* Mádhavya *ſit down: Muſick, behind the ſcenes.*

Mádh. Liſten, my royal friend. I hear a well-tuned *Vinà* ſounding, as if it were in concert with the lutes of the Gods, from yonder apartment. The queen *Hanſamati* is preparing, I imagine, to greet you with a new ſong.

Duſhm. Be ſilent, that I may liſten.

Cham. *(aſide)* The king's mind ſeems intent on ſome other buſineſs. I muſt wait his leiſure.

Retiring on one ſide.

Behind the ſcenes) A Song.

"Sweet bee, who, deſirous of extracting freſh "honey, waſt wont to kiſs the ſoft border of the "new-blown *Amra*-flower, how canſt thou now "be ſatisfied with the water lily, and forget the "firſt object of thy love?"

Duſhm. The ditty breathes a tender paſſion.

Mádh. Does the king know its meaning? It is too deep for me.

Duſhm. *(ſmiling)* I was once in love with *Han-*

ſamatì, and am now reproved for continuing ſo long abſent from her. Friend *Mádhavya*, inform the queen in my name, that I feel the reproof.

Mádh. As the king commands; but—— *(riſing ſlowly)* My friend, you are going to ſeize a ſharp lance with another man's hand. I cannot reliſh your commiſſion to an enraged woman. A hermit cannot be happy, till he has taken leave of all paſſions whatever.

Duſhm. Go, my kind friend: the urbanity of thy diſcourſe will appeaſe her.

Mádh. What an errand! *He goes out.*

Duſhm. (aſide) Ah! what makes me ſo melancholy on hearing a mere ſong on abſence, when I am not in fact ſeparated from any real object of my affection? Perhaps, the ſadneſs of men, otherwiſe happy, on ſeeing beautiful forms and liſtening to ſweet melody, ariſes from ſome faint remembrance of paſt joys and the traces of connexions in a former ſtate of exiſtence.

He ſits penſive and ſorrowful.

Cham. (advancing humbly) May our ſovereign be victorious! Two religious men, with ſome women, are come from their abode in a foreſt

near the Snowy Mountains, and bring a meſſage from *Canna*. The king will command.

Duſhm. (ſurprized) What! Are pious hermits arrived in the company of women?

Cham. It is even ſo.

Duſhm. Order the prieſt *Sómaráta*, in my name, to ſhew them due reverence in the form appointed by the *Véda*; and bid him attend me. I ſhall wait for my holy gueſts in a place fit for their reception.

Cham. I obey. *He goes out.*

Duſhm. Wardour, point the way to the hearth of the conſecrated fire.

Ward. This, O king, this is the way ——— *(he walks before)* Here is the entrance of the hallowed encloſure; and there ſtands the venerable cow to be milked for the ſacrifice, looking bright from the recent ſprinkling of myſtick water. Let the king aſcend.

Duſhmanta *is raiſed to the place of ſacrifice on the ſhoulders of his wardours.*

Duſhm. What meſſage can the pious *Canna*

have ſent me? Has the devotion of his pupils been impeded by evil ſpirits, or by what other calamity? Or has any harm, alas! befallen the poor herds, who graze in the hallowed foreſt? Or have the ſins of the king tainted the flowers and fruits of the creepers planted by female hermits? My mind is entangled in a labyrinth of confuſed apprehenſions.

Ward. What our ſovereign imagines, cannot poſſibly have happened; ſince the hermitage has been rendered ſecure from evil by the mere ſound of his bowſtring. The pious men, whom the king's benevolence has made happy, are come, I preſume, to do him homage.

Enter Sárngarava, Sáradwata, *and* Gautamì *leading* Sacontalá *by the hand; and before them the old Chamberlain and the Prieſt.*

Cham. This way, reſpectable ſtrangers, come this way.

Sárn. My friend *Sáradwata,* there ſits the king of men, who has felicity at command, yet ſhows equal reſpect to all: here no ſubject, even of the

loweſt claſs, is received with contempt. Nevertheleſs, my ſoul having ever been free from attachment to worldly things, I conſider this hearth, although a crowd now ſurround it, as the ſtation merely of conſecrated fire.

Sárad. I was not leſs confounded than yourſelf on entering the populous city; but now I look on it, as a man juſt bathed in pure water on a man ſmeared with oil and duſt, as the pure on the impure, as the waking on the ſleeping, as the free man on the captive, as the independent on the ſlave.

Prieſt: Thence it is, that men, like you two, are ſo elevated above other mortals.

Sac. (perceiving a bad omen) Venerable mother, I feel my right eye throb! What means this involuntary motion?

Gaut. Heaven avert the omen, my ſweet child! May every delight attend thee! *They all advance.*

Prieſt: (ſhowing the king to them) There, holy men, is the protector of the people; who has taken his ſeat, and expects you.

Sárn. This is what we wiſhed; yet we have no private intereſt in the buſineſs. It is ever thus:

trees are bent by the abundance of their fruit; clouds are brought low, when they teem with salubrious rain; and the real benefactors of mankind are not elated by riches.

Ward. O king, the holy guests appear before you with placid looks, indicating their affection.

Dushm. (*gazing at* Sacontalá) Ah! what damsel is that, whose mantle conceals the far greater part of her beautiful form? She looks, among the hermits, like a fresh green bud among faded and yellow leaves.

Ward. This at least, O king, is apparent; that she has a form, which deserves to be seen more distinctly.

Dushm. Let her still be covered: she seems pregnant; and the wife of another must not be seen even by me.

Sac. (*aside, with her hand to her bosom*) O my heart, why dost thou palpitate? Remember the beginning of thy lord's affection, and be tranquil.

Priest: May the king prosper! The respectable guests have been honoured, as the law ordains; and they have now a message to deliver from their spiritual guide: let the king deign to hear it.

Duſhm. (with reverence) I am attentive.

Both Miſra's: (extending their hands) Victory attend thy banners!

Duſhm. I reſpectfully greet you both.

Both: Bleſſings on our ſovereign!

Duſhm. Has your devotion been uninterrupted?

Sárn. How ſhould our rites be diſturbed, when thou art the preſerver of all creatures? How, when the bright ſun blazes, ſhould darkneſs cover the world?

Duſhm. (aſide) The name of royalty produces, I ſuppoſe, all worldly advantages! *(aloud)* Does the holy *Canna* then proſper?

Sárn. O king, they, who gather the fruits of devotion, may command proſperity. He firſt inquires affectionately whether thy arms are ſucceſsful, and then addreſſes thee in theſe words ——

Duſhm. What are his orders?

Sárn. "The contract of marriage, reciprocally made between thee and this girl, my "daughter, I confirm with tender regard; ſince "thou art celebrated as the moſt honourable of "men, and my *Sacontalá* is Virtue herſelf in a "human form. No blaſphemous complaint will

" henceforth be made againſt *Brahmá*, for ſuffer-
" ing diſcordant matches: he has now united a
" bride and bridegroom with qualities equally
" tranſcendent. Since, therefore, ſhe is preg-
" nant by thee, receive her in thy palace, that
" ſhe may perform, in conjunction with thee,
" the duties preſcribed by religion."

Gaut. Great king, thou haſt a mild aſpect; and I wiſh to addreſs thee in few words.

Duſhm. (ſmiling) Speak, venerable matron.

Gaut. She waited not the return of her ſpiritual father; nor were thy kindred conſulted by thee. You two only were preſent, when your nuptials were ſolemnized: now, therefore, converſe freely together in the abſence of all others.

Sac. (aſide) What will my lord ſay?

Duſhm. (aſide, perplexed) How ſtrange an adventure!

Sac. (aſide) Ah me! how diſdainfully he ſeems to receive the meſſage!

Sárn. (aſide) What means that phraſe, which I overheard, " *how ſtrange an adventure?*" *(aloud)* Monarch, thou knoweſt the hearts of men. Let a wife behave ever ſo directly, the world will

think ill of her, if ſhe live only with her paternal kinſmen; and a lawful wife now requeſts, as her kindred alſo humbly entreat, that whether ſhe be loved or not, ſhe may paſs her days in the manſion of her huſband.

Duſhm. What ſayſt thou? Am I the lady's huſband?

Sac. (aſide with anguiſh) O my heart, thy fears have proved juſt.

Sárn. Does it become a magnificent prince to depart from the rules of religion and honour, merely becauſe he repents of his engagements?

Duſhm. With what hope of ſucceſs could this groundleſs fable have been invented?

Sárn. (angrily) The minds of thoſe, whom power intoxicates, are perpetually changing.

Duſhm. I am reproved with too great ſeverity.

Gaut. (to Sacontalá) Be not aſhamed, my ſweet child: let me take off thy mantle, that the king may recollect thee. *She unveils her.*

Duſhm. (aſide, looking at Sacontalá*)* While I am doubtful, whether this unblemiſhed beauty, which is diſplayed before me, has not been poſſeſſed by another, I reſemble a bee fluttering at the

close of night over a bloſſom filled with dew; and, in this ſtate of mind, I neither can enjoy, nor forſake, her.

Ward. (*aſide to* Duſhmanta) The king beſt knows his rights and his duties: but who would heſitate, when a woman, bright as a gem, brings luſtre to the apartments of his palace?

Sárn. What, O king, does thy ſtrange ſilence import?

Duſhm. Holy man, I have been meditating again and again, but have no recollection of my marriage with this lady. How then can I lay aſide all conſideration of my military tribe, and admit into my palace a young woman, who is pregnant by another huſband?

Sac. (*aſide*) Ah! wo is me. Can there be a doubt even of our nuptials? The tree of my hope, which had riſen ſo luxuriantly, is at once broken down.

Sárn. Beware, leſt the godlike Sage, who would have beſtowed on thee, as a free gift, his ineſtimable treaſure, which thou hadſt taken, like a baſe robber, ſhould now ceaſe to think of thee, who art lawfully married to his daughter, and

ſhould confine all his thoughts to her, whom thy perfidy diſgraces.

Sárad. Reſt awhile, my *Sárngarava*; and thou, *Sacontalá*, take thy turn to ſpeak; ſince thy lord has declared his forgetfulneſs.

Sac. (aſide) If his affection has ceaſed, of what uſe will it be to recal his remembrance of me? Yet, if my ſoul muſt endure torment, be it ſo: I will ſpeak to him. *(aloud to* Duſhmanta) O my huſband ——— *(pauſing)* or (if the juſt application of that ſacred word be ſtill doubted by thee) O ſon of *Puru*, is it becoming, that, having been once enamoured of me in the conſecrated foreſt, and having ſhown the exceſs of thy paſſion, thou ſhouldſt this day deny me with bitter expreſſions?

Duſhm. (covering his ears) Be the crime removed from my ſoul! Thou haſt been inſtructed for ſome baſe purpoſe to vilify me, and make me fall from the dignity, which I have hitherto ſupported; as a river, which has burſt its banks and altered its placid current, overthrows the trees, that had riſen aloft on them.

Sac. If thou ſayſt this merely from want of recollection, I will reſtore thy memory by produc-

ing thy own ring, with thy name engraved on it.

Duſhm. A capital invention!

Sac. (looking at her finger) Ah me! I have no ring. *She fixes her eyes with anguiſh on* Gautamí.

Gaut. The fatal ring muſt have dropped, my child, from thy hand, when thou tookeſt up water to pour on thy head in the pool of *Sachítírt'ha* near the ſtation of *Sacrávatára*.

Duſhm. (ſmiling) So ſkilful are women in finding ready excuſes!

Sac. The power of *Brahmá* muſt prevail: I will yet mention one circumſtance.

Duſhm. I muſt ſubmit to hear the tale.

Sac. One day, in a grove of *Vétaſa*'s, thou tookeſt water in thy hand from its natural vaſe of lotos-leaves.

Duſhm. What followed?

Sac. At that inſtant a little fawn, which I had reared as my own child, approached thee; and thou ſaidſt with benevolence: "Drink thou firſt, "gentle fawn." He would not drink from the hand of a ſtranger, but received water eagerly from mine; when thou ſaidſt, with increaſing affection: "Thus every creature loves its compa-

" nions; you are both foreſters alike, and both " alike amiable."

Duſhm. By ſuch intereſted and honied falſehoods are the ſouls of voluptuaries enſnared!

Gaut. Forbear, illuſtrious prince, to ſpeak harſhly. She was bred in a ſacred grove, where ſhe learned no guile.

Duſhm. Pious matron, the dexterity of females, even when they are untaught, appears in thoſe of a ſpecies different from our own. What would it be, if they were duly inſtructed? The female *Cecila's*, before they fly towards the firmament, leave their eggs to be hatched, and their young fed, by birds who have no relation to them.

Sac. (with anger) O void of honour, thou meaſureſt all the world by thy own bad heart. What prince ever reſembled, or ever will reſemble, thee, who weareſt the garb of religion and virtue, but in truth art a baſe deceiver; like a deep well, whoſe mouth is covered with ſmiling plants!

Duſhm. (aſide) The ruſticity of her education makes her ſpeak thus angrily and inconſiſtently with female decorum. She looks indignant; her eye glows; and her ſpeech, formed of harſh terms,

falters as ſhe utters them. Her lip, ruddy as the *Bimba*-fruit, quivers, as if it were nipped with froſt; and her eye-brows, naturally ſmooth and equal, are at once irregularly contracted. Thus, having failed in circumventing me by the apparent luſtre of ſimplicity, ſhe has recourſe to wrath, and ſnaps in two the bow of *Cáma*, which, if ſhe had not belonged to another, might have wounded me. *(aloud)* The heart of *Duſhmanta*, young woman, is known to all; and thine is betrayed by thy preſent demeanour.

Sac. (ironically) You kings are in all caſes to be credited implicitly: you perfectly know the reſpect, which is due to virtue and to mankind, while females, however modeſt, however virtuous, know nothing, and ſpeak nothing truly. In a happy hour I came hither to ſeek the object of my affection: in a happy moment I received the hand of a prince deſcended from *Puru*; a prince, who had won my confidence by the honey of his words, whilſt his heart concealed the weapon, that was to pierce mine.

She hides her face and weeps.

Sárn. This inſufferable mutability of the king's

temper kindles my wrath. Henceforth let all be circumſpect, before they form ſecret connexions; a friendſhip haſtily contracted, when both hearts are not perfectly known, muſt erelong become enmity.

Duſhm. Wouldſt thou force me then to commit an enormous crime, relying ſolely on her ſmooth ſpeeches?

Sárn. (ſcornfully) Thou haſt heard an anſwer ——. The words of an incomparable girl, who never learned what iniquity was, are here to receive no credit, while they, whoſe learning conſiſts in accuſing others, and inquiring into crimes, are the only perſons, who ſpeak truth!

Duſhm. O man of unimpeached veracity, I certainly am what thou deſcribeſt; but what would be gained by accuſing thy female aſſociate?

Sárn. Eternal miſery.

Duſhm. No; miſery will never be the portion of *Puru's* deſcendents.

Sárn. What avails our altercation? O king, we have obeyed the commands of our preceptor, and now return. *Sacontalá* is by law thy wife, whether thou defert or acknowledge her; and the do-

minion of a huſband is abſolute. Go before us, *Gautamì. The two* Miſra's *and* Gautamì *returning.*

Sac. I have been deceived by this perfidious man; but will you, my friends, will you alſo forſake me? *Following them.*

Gaut. (looking back) My ſon, *Sacontalá* follows us with affectionate ſupplications. What can ſhe do here with a faithleſs huſband; ſhe, who is all tenderneſs?

Sárn. (angrily to Sacontalá) O wife, who ſeeſt the faults of thy lord, doſt thou deſire independence? Sacontalá *ſtops and trembles.*

Sárad. Let the queen hear. If thou beeſt what the king proclaims thee, what right haſt thou to complain? But, if thou knoweſt the purity of thy own ſoul, it will become thee to wait as a handmaid in the manſion of thy lord. Stay then, where thou art: we muſt return to *Canna.*

Duſhm. Deceive her not, holy men, with vain expectations. The moon opens the night-flower; and the ſun makes the water-lily bloſſom: each is confined to its own object; and thus a virtuous man abſtains from any connexion with the wife of another.

Sárn. Yet thou, O king, who feareſt to offend religion and virtue, art not afraid to deſert thy wedded wife; pretending, that the variety of thy publick affairs has made thee forget thy private contract.

Duſhm. (to his prieſt) I really have no remembrance of any ſuch engagement; and I aſk thee, my ſpiritual counſellor, whether of the two offences be the greater, to forſake my own wife, or to have an intercourſe with the wife of another.

Prieſt: (after ſome deliberation) We may adopt an expedient between both.

Duſhm. Let my venerable guide command.

Prieſt: The young woman may dwell, till her delivery, in my houſe.

Duſhm. For what purpoſe?

Prieſt: Wiſe aſtrologers have aſſured the king, that he will be the father of an illuſtrious prince, whoſe dominion will be bounded by the weſtern and eaſtern ſeas: now, if the holy man's daughter ſhall bring forth a ſon, whoſe hands and feet bear the marks of extenſive ſovereignty, I will do homage to her as my queen, and conduct her to the

royal apartments; if not, ſhe ſhall return in due time to her father.

Duſhm. Be it, as you judge proper.

Prieſt: (*to* Sacontalá) This way, my daughter; follow me.

Sac. O earth, mild goddeſs, give me a place within thy boſom.

She goes out weeping, with the Prieſt; while the two Miſra's *go out by a different way with* Gautamì. Duſhmanta *ſtands meditating on the beauty of* Sacontalá; *but the imprecation ſtill clouds his memory.*

Behind the ſcenes) O miraculous event!

Duſhm. (liſtening) What can have happened?

The Prieſt re-enters.

Prieſt: Hear, O king, the ſtupendous event. When *Canna*'s pupils had departed, *Sacontalá*, bewailing her adverſe fortune, extended her arms, and wept; when ———

Duſhm. What then?

Prieſt: A body of light, in a female ſhape, deſcended near *Apſaraſtírt'ha*, where the nymphs of heaven are worſhipped; and, having caught her

haſtily in her boſom, diſappeared.

All expreſs aſtoniſhment.

Duſhm. I ſuſpected from the beginning ſome work of ſorcery. The buſineſs is over; and it is needleſs to reaſon more on it. Let thy mind, *Sámaráta,* be at reſt.

Prieſt: May the king be victorious!

He goes out.

Duſhm. Chamberlain, I have been greatly haraſſed; and thou, wardour, go before me to a place of repoſe.

Ward. This way; let the king come this way.

Duſhm. (advancing, aſide) I cannot with all my efforts recollect my nuptials with the daughter of the hermit; yet ſo agitated is my heart, that it almoſt induces me to believe her ſtory.

All go out.

ACT VI.

SCENE, *a Street.*

Enter a Superintendent of Police with two Officers, leading a man with his hands bound.

First Off. (*striking the priſoner*) Take that, *Cumbhílaca*, if *Cumbhílaca* be thy name; and tell us now, where thou gotteſt this ring, bright with a large gem, on which the king's name is engraved.

Cumbh. (*trembling*) Spare me, I entreat your honours to ſpare me: I am not guilty of ſo great a crime, as you ſuſpect.

First Off. O diſtinguiſhed *Bráhmen*, didſt thou then receive it from the king as a reward of ſome important ſervice?

Cumbh. Only hear me: I am a poor fiſherman dwelling at *Sacrávatára*.———

Second Off. Did we aſk, thou thief, about thy tribe or thy dwelling-place?

Sup. O *Súchaca*, let the fellow tell his own ſtory. Now conceal nothing, ſirrah.

First Off. Doſt thou hear? Do, as our maſter commands.

Cumbh. I am a man, who ſupport my family by catching fiſh in nets, or with hooks, and by various other contrivances.

Sup. (laughing) A virtuous way of gaining a livelihood!

Cumbh. Blame me not, maſter. The occupation of our forefathers, how low ſoever, muſt not be forſaken; and a man, who kills animals for ſale, may have a tender heart, though his act be cruel.

Sup. Go on, go on.

Cumbh. One day having caught a large *Róhita*-fiſh, I cut it open, and ſaw this bright ring in its ſtomach; but, when I offered to ſell it, I was apprehended by your honours. So far only am I guilty of taking the ring. Will you now continue beating and bruiſing me to death?

Sup. (ſmelling the ring) It is certain, *Jáluca*, that this gem has been in the body of a fiſh. The caſe requires conſideration; and I will mention it to ſome of the king's houſehold.

Both Off. Come on, cutpurſe. *They advance.*

Sup. Stand here, *Súchaca*, at the great gate of the city, and wait for me, while I ſpeak to ſome of the officers in the palace.

Both Off. Go, *Rájayucta.* May the king favour thee! *The ſuperintendent goes out.*

Second Off. Our maſter will ſtay, I fear, a long while.

Firſt Off. Yes; acceſs to kings can only be had at their leiſure.

Second Off. The tips of my fingers itch, my friend *Jáluca*, to kill this cutpurſe.

Cumbh. You would put to death an innocent man.

Firſt Off. (looking) Here comes our maſter. The king has decided quickly. Now, *Cumbhílaca*, you will either ſee your companions again, or be the the food of ſhakals and vultures.

The Superintendent re-enters.

Sup. Let the fiſherman immediately ——

Cumbh. (in an agony) Oh! I am a dead man.

Sup. —— be diſcharged. Hola! ſet him at liberty. The king ſays he knows his innocence;

and his ſtory is true.

Second Off. As our maſter commands. The fellow is brought back from the manſion of *Yama*, to which he was haſtening.

Unbinding the fiſherman.

Cumbh. (bowing) My lord, I owe my life to your kindneſs.

Sup. Riſe, friend; and hear with delight, that the king gives thee a ſum of money equal to the full value of the ring: it is a fortune to a man in thy ſtation. *Giving him the money.*

Cumbh. (with rapture) I am tranſported with joy.

Firſt Off. This vagabond ſeems to be taken down from the ſtake, and ſet on the back of a ſtate-elephant.

Second Off. The king, I ſuppoſe, has a great affection for his gem.

Sup. Not for its intrinſick value; but I gueſſed the cauſe of his extaſy, when he ſaw it.

Both Off. What could occaſion it?

Sup. I ſuſpect, that it recalled to his memory ſome perſon, who has a place in his heart; for, though his mind be naturally firm, yet, from the

moment when he beheld the ring, he was for ſome minutes exceſſively agitated.

Second Off. Our maſter has given the king extreme pleaſure.

Firſt Off. Yes; and by the means of this fiſh-catcher. *Looking fiercely at him.*

Cumbh. Be not angry. Half the money ſhall be divided between you to purchaſe wine.

Firſt Off. Oh! now thou art our beloved friend. Good wine is the firſt object of our affection. Let us go together to the vintner's.

They all go out.

SCENE, the Garden of the Palace.

The Nymph Miſracésì *appears in the air.*

Miſr. My firſt taſk was duly performed, when I went to bathe in the Nymphs' pool; and I now muſt ſee with my own eyes how the virtuous king is affected. *Sacontalà* is dear to this heart, becauſe ſhe is the daughter of my beloved *Ménacà*, from whom I received both commiſſions. *(ſhe looks round)* Ah! on a day full of delights the mo-

narch's family ſeem oppreſſed with ſome new ſorrow. By exerting my ſupernatural power I could know what has paſſed; but reſpect muſt be ſhown to the deſire of *Menacà*. I will retire, therefore, among thoſe plants, and obſerve what is done without being viſible.

She deſcends, and takes her ſtation.

Enter two Damſels, attendants on the God of Love.

Firſt Dams. (looking at an Amra-*flower).* The bloſſoms of yon *Amra*, waving on the green ſtalk, are freſh and light as the breath of this vernal month. I muſt preſent the goddeſs *Reti* with a baſket of them.

Second Dams. Why, my *Parabhritica*, doſt thou mean to preſent it alone?

Firſt Dams. O my friend *Madhucarica*, when a female *Cécilà*, which my name implies, ſees a blooming *Amra*, ſhe becomes entranced and loſes her recollection.

Second Dams. (with tranſport) What! is the ſeaſon of ſweets actually returned?

Firſt Dams. Yes; the ſeaſon in which we muſt

ſing of nothing but wine and love.

Second Dams. Support me then, while I climb up this tree, and ſtrip it of its fragrant gems, which we will carry as an offering to *Cáma.*

Firſt Dams. If I aſſiſt, I muſt have a moiety of the reward, which the God will beſtow.

Second Dams. To be ſure, and without any previous bargain. We are only one ſoul, you know, through *Brahmá* has given it two bodies. *(She climbs up, and gathers the flowers).* Ah! the buds are hardly opened. Here is one a little expanded, which diffuſes a charming odour *(taking a handful of buds).* This flower is ſacred to the God, who bears a fiſh on his banner. O ſweet bloſſom, which I now conſecrate, thou well deſerveſt, to point the ſixth arrow of *Cámadéva,* who now takes his bow to pierce myriads of youthful hearts. *(She throws down a bloſſom).*

The old Chamberlain enters.

Cham. (angrily) Deſiſt from breaking off thoſe half-opened buds: there will be no jubilee this year: our king has forbidden it.

Both Damſels: Oh! pardon us. We really knew not the prohibition.

Cham. You knew it not! Even the trees, which the ſpring was decking, and the birds, who perch on them, ſympathize with our monarch. Thence it is, that yon buds, which have long appeared, ſhed not yet their prolifick duſt; and the flower of the *Curuvaca*, though perfectly formed, remains veiled in a cloſed chalice; while the voice of the *Cécila*, though the cold dews fall no more, is fixed within his throat, and even *Smara*, the god of deſire, replaces the ſhaft half-drawn from his quiver.

Miſr. (*aſide*) The king, no doubt, is conſtant and tender hearted.

Firſt Dams. A few days ago *Mitravaſu*, the governor of our province diſpatched us to kiſs the feet of the king, and we come to decorate his groves and gardens with various emblems: thence it is, that we heard nothing of his interdict.

Cham. Beware then of reiterating your offence.

Second Dams. To obey our lord will certainly be our delight; but, if we are permitted to hear the ſtory, tell us, we pray, what has induced our

ſovereign to forbid the uſual feſtivity.

Miſr. *(aſide)* Kings are generally fond of gay entertainments; and there muſt be ſome weighty reaſon for the prohibition.

Cham. *(aſide)* The affair is publick: why ſhould I not ſatisfy them? *(aloud)* Has not the calamitous deſertion of *Sacontalá* reached your ears?

Firſt Dams. We heard her tale from the governor, as far as the ſight of the fatal ring.

Cham. Then I have little to add. When the king's memory was reſtored by the ſight of his gem, he inſtantly exclaimed: "Yes, the incom-"parable *Sacontalá* is my lawful wife; and, when "I rejected her, I had loſt my reaſon." He ſhowed ſtrong marks of extreme affliction and penitence; and from that moment he has abhored the pleaſures of life. No longer does he exert his reſpectable talents from day to day for the good of his people: he prolongs his nights, without cloſing his eyes, perpetually rolling on the edge of his couch; and, when he riſes, he pronounces not one ſentence aptly; miſtaking the names of the women in his apartments, and, through diſtraction, calling each of them *Sacon-*

talá: then he ſits abaſhed, with his head long bent on his knees.

Miſr. (aſide) This is pleaſing to me, very pleaſing.

Cham. By reaſon of the deep ſorrow, which now prevails in his heart, the vernal jubilee has been interdicted.

Both Dams. The prohibition is highly proper.

Behind the ſcenes.) Make way! The king is paſſing.

Cham. (liſtening) Here comes the monarch: depart therefore, damſels, to your own province.

The two Damſels go out.

Duſhmanta *enters in penitential weeds, preceded by a Warder, and attended by* Mádhavya.

Cham. (looking at the king) Ah! how majeſtick are noble forms in every habiliment! Our prince, even in the garb of affliction, is a venerable object. Though he has abandoned pleaſure, ornaments, and buſineſs; though he is become ſo thin, that his golden bracelet falls looſened even down to his wriſt; though his lips are parched with the heat of his ſighs, and his eyes are fixed

open by long ſorrow and want of ſleep, yet am I dazzled by the blaze of virtue, which beams in his countenance like a diamond exquiſitely poliſhed.

Miſr. (*aſide, gazing on* Duſhmanta) With good reaſon is my beloved *Sacontalá*, though diſgraced and rejected, heavily oppreſſed with grief through the abſence of this youth.

Duſhm. (*advancing ſlowly in deep meditation*) When my darling, with an antelope's eyes, would have reminded me of our love, I was aſſuredly ſlumbering; but exceſs of miſery has awakened me.

Miſr. (*aſide*) The charming girl will at laſt be happy.

Madh. (*aſide*) This monarch of ours is caught again in the gale of affection; and I hardly know a remedy for his illneſs.

Cham. (*approaching* Duſhmanta) May the king be victorious! Let him ſurvey yon fine woodland, theſe cool walks, and this blooming garden; where he may repoſe with pleaſure on banks of delight.

Duſhm. (*not attending to him*) Warder, inform

the chief miniſter in my name, that, having reſolved on a long abſence from the city, I do not mean to ſit for ſome time in the tribunal; but let him write and diſpatch to me all the caſes, that may ariſe among my ſubjects.

Ward. As the king commands. *He goes out.*

Duſhm. (*to the Chamberlain*) And thou, *Párvatáyana*, neglect not thy ſtated buſineſs.

Cham. By no means. *He goes out.*

Mádh. You have not left a fly in the garden. Amuſe yourſelf now in this retreat, which ſeems pleaſed with the departure of the dewy ſeaſon.

Duſhm. O *Mádhavya*, when perſons, accuſed of great offences, prove wholly innocent, ſee how their accuſers are puniſhed! A phrenſy obſtructed my remembrance of any former love for the daughter of the Sage; and now the heart-born God, who delights in giving pain, has fixed in his bowſtring a new ſhaft pointed with the bloſſom of an *Amra*. The fatal ring having reſtored my memory, ſee me deplore with tears of repentance the loſs of my beſt beloved, whom I rejected without cauſe; ſee me overwhelmed with ſorrow, even while the return of ſpring fills the hearts of

all others wlth pleaſure.

Mádh. Be ſtill, my friend, whilſt I break Love's arrows with my ſtaff. *He ſtrikes off ſome flowers from an* Amra-*tree.*

Duſhm. (meditating) Yes, I acknowledge the ſupreme power of *Brahmà*. *(to* Mádhavya) Where now, my friend, ſhall I ſit and recreate my ſight with the ſlender ſhrubs, which bear a faint reſemblance to the ſhape of *Sacontalá?*

Mádh. You will ſoon ſee the damſel ſkilled in painting, whom you informed that you would ſpend the forenoon in yon bower of *Mádhavì*-creepers; and ſhe will bring the queen's picture, which you commanded her to draw.

Duſhm. My ſoul will be delighted even by her picture. Show the way to the bower.

Mádh. This way, my friend.

They both advance, Miſracésì *following them.*

Mádh. The arbour of twining *Mádhavì's*, embelliſhed with fragments of ſtone like bright gems, appears by its pleaſantneſs, though without a voice, to bid thee welcome. Let us enter it, and be ſeated. *They both ſit down in the bower.*

Miſr. (aſide) From behind theſe branchy ſhrubs

I ſhall behold the picture of my *Sacontalá*. I will afterwards haſten to report the ſincere affection of her huſband. *She conceals herſelf.*

Duſhm. (ſighing) O my approved friend, the whole adventure of the hermitage is now freſh in my memory. I informed you, how deeply I was affected by the firſt ſight of the damſels; but, when ſhe was rejected by me, you were not preſent. Her name was often repeated by me (how, indeed, ſhould it not?) in our converſation.— What! haſt thou forgotten, as I had, the whole ſtory?

Miſr. (aſide) The ſovereigns of the world muſt not, I find, be left an inſtant without the objects of their love.

Mádh. Oh! no: I have not forgotten it; but, at the end of our diſcourſe you aſſured me, that your love-tale was invented ſolely for your diverſion; and this, in the ſimplicity of my heart, I believed. Some great event ſeems, in all this affair, to be predeſtined in heaven.

Miſr. (aſide) Nothing is more true.

Duſhm. (having meditated) Oh! my friend, ſuggeſt ſome relief for my torment.

Mádh. What new pain torments you? Virtuous men ſhould never be thus afflicted: the moſt violent wind ſhakes not mountains.

Duſhm. When I reflect on the ſituation of your friend *Sacontalá*, who muſt now be greatly affected by my deſertion of her, I am without comfort. She made an attempt to follow the *Bráhmens* and the matron: Stay, ſaid the Sage's pupil, who was revered as the Sage himſelf; Stay, ſaid he, with a loud voice. Then once more ſhe fixed on me, who had betrayed her, that celeſtial face, then bedewed with guſhing tears; and the bare idea of her pain burns me like an envenomed javelin.

Miſr. *(aſide)* How he afflicts himſelf! I really ſympathize with him.

Mádh. Surely ſome inhabitant of the heavens muſt have wafted her to his manſion.

Duſhm. No; what male divinity would have taken the pains to carry off a wife ſo firmly attached to her lord? *Ménacá*, the nymph of *Swerga*, gave her birth; and ſome of her attendant nymphs have, I imagine, concealed her at the deſire of her mother.

Miſr. *(aſide)* To reject *Sacontalá* was, no doubt, the effect of a delirium, not the act of a waking man.

Mádh. If it be thus, you will ſoon meet her again.

Duſhm. Alas! why do you think ſo?

Madh. Becauſe no father and mother can long endure to ſee their daughter deprived of her huſband.

Duſhm. Was it ſleep, that impaired my memory? Was it deluſion? Was it an errour of my judgement? Or was it the deſtined reward of my bad actions? Whatever it was, I am ſenſible, that, until *Sacontalá* return to theſe arms, I ſhall be plunged in the abyſs of affliction.

Mádh. Do not deſpair: the fatal ring is itſelf an example, that the loſt may be found. Events, which were foredoomed by heaven, muſt not be lamented.

Duſhm. *(looking at his ring)* The fate of this ring, now fallen from a ſtation, which it will not eaſily regain, I may at leaſt deplore. O gem, thou art removed from the ſoft finger, beautiful with ruddy tips, on which a place had been aſ-

ſigned thee; and, minute as thou art, thy bad qualities appear from the ſimilarity of thy puniſhment to mine.

Miſr. *(aſide)* Had it found a way to any other hand, its lot would have been truly deplorable. O *Ménacà*, how wouldſt thou be delighted with the converſation, which gratifies my ears!

Mádh. Let me know, I pray, by what means the ring obtained a place on the finger of *Sacontalá*.

Duſhm. You ſhall know, my friend. When I was coming from the holy foreſt to my capital, my beloved, with tears in her eyes, thus addreſſed me: "How long will the ſon of my lord "keep me in his remembrance?"

Mádh. Well; what then?

Duſhm. Then, fixing this ring on her lovely finger, I thus anſwered: "Repeat each day one "of the three ſyllables engraved on this gem; "and, before thou haſt ſpelled the word *Duſh-* "*manta*, one of my nobleſt officers ſhall attend "thee, and conduct my darling to her palace." Yet I forgot, I deſerted, her in my phrenſy.

Miſr. *(aſide)* A charming interval of three days was fixed between their ſeparation and their

meeting, which the will of *Brahmà* rendered unhappy.

Mádh. But how came the ring to enter, like a hook, into the mouth of a carp?

Duſhm. When my beloved was lifting water to her head in the pool of *Sachitírtha*, the ring muſt have dropped unſeen.

Mádh. It is very probable.

Miſr. *(aſide)* Oh! it was thence, that a king, who fears nothing but injuſtice, doubted the reality of his marriage; but how, I wonder, could his memory be connected with a ring?

Duſhm. I am really angry with this gem.

Mádh. *(laughing)* So am I with this ſtaff.

Duſhm. Why ſo, *Mádhavya?*

Mádh. Becauſe it preſumes to be ſo ſtraight, when I am ſo crooked. Impertinent ſtick!

Duſhm. *(not attending to him)* How, O ring, couldſt thou leave that hand adorned with ſoft long fingers, and fall into a pool decked only with water-lilies? The anſwer is obvious: thou art irrational. But how could I, who was born with a reaſonable ſoul, deſert my only beloved?

Miſr. *(aſide)* He anticipates my remark.

Mádh. (aſide) So; I muſt wait here during his meditations, and periſh with hunger.

Duſhm. O my darling, whom I treated with diſreſpect, and forſook without reaſon, when will this traitor, whoſe heart is deeply ſtung with repentant ſorrow, be once more bleſſed with a ſight of thee?

A Damſel enters with a picture.

Dams. Great king, the picture is finiſhed.

Holding it before him.

Duſhm. (gazing on it) Yes; that is her face, thoſe are her beautiful eyes; thoſe her lips embelliſhed with ſmiles, and ſurpaſſing the red luſtre of the *Carcandhu* fruit: her mouth ſeems, though painted, to ſpeak, and her countenance darts beams of affection blended with a variety of melting tints.

Mádh. Truly, my friend, it is a picture ſweet as love itſelf: my eye glides up and down to feaſt on every particle of it; and it gives me as much delight, as if I were actually converſing with the living *Sacontalá.*

Miſr. (aſide) An exquiſite piece of painting!

My beloved friend ſeems to ſtand before my eyes.

Duſhm. Yet the picture is infinitely below the original; and my warm fancy by ſupplying its imperfections, repreſents in ſome degree the lovelineſs of my darling.

Miſr. (aſide) His ideas are ſuitable to his exceſſive love and ſevere penitence.

Duſhm. (ſighing) Alas, I rejected her, when ſhe lately approached me, and now I do homage to her picture; like a traveller, who negligently paſſes by a clear and full rivulet, and ſoon ardently thirſts for a falſe appearance of water on the ſandy deſert.

Mádh. There are ſo many female figures on this canvas, that I cannot well diſtinguiſh the lady *Sacontalá.*

Miſr. (aſide) The old man is ignorant of her tranſcendent beauty: her eyes, which faſcinated the ſoul of his prince, never ſparkled, I ſuppoſe, on *Mádhavya.*

Duſhm. Which of the figures do you conceive intended for the queen?

Mádh. (examining the picture) It is She, I imagine, who looks a little fatigued; with the ſtring

of her veſt rather looſe; the ſlender ſtalks of her arms falling languidly; a few bright drops on her face, and ſome flowers dropping from her untied locks. That muſt be the queen; and the reſt, I ſuppoſe, are her damſels.

Duſhm. You judge well; but my affection requires ſomething more in the piece. Beſides, through ſome defect in the colouring, a tear ſeems trickling down her cheek, which ill ſuits the ſtate in which I deſired to ſee her painted. *(to the Damſel)* The picture, O *Chaturicà*, is unfiniſhed. Go back to the painting-room, and bring the implements of thy art.

Dams. Kind *Mádhavya*, hold the picture, while I obey the king.

Duſhm. No; I will hold it.

He takes the picture; and the Damſel goes out.

Mádh. What elſe is to be painted?

Miſr. (aſide) He deſires, I preſume, to add all thoſe circumſtances, which became the ſituation of his beloved in the hermitage.

Duſhm. In this landſcape, my friend, I wiſh to ſee repreſented the river *Málinì*, with ſome amorous *Flamingo*'s on its green margin; farther

back muſt appear ſome hills near the mountain *Himálaya*, ſurrounded with herds of *Chamara's*; and in the foreground, a dark ſpreading tree, with ſome mantles of woven bark ſuſpended on its branches to be dried by the ſunbeams; while a pair of black antelopes couch in its ſhade, and the female gently rubs her beautiful forehead on the horn of the male.

Mádh. Add what you pleaſe; but, in my judgement, the vacant places ſhould be filled with old hermits bent, like me, towards the ground.

Duſhm. *(not attending to him)* Oh! I had forgotten, that my beloved herſelf muſt have ſome new ornaments.

Mádh. What, I pray?

Miſr. *(aſide)* Such, no doubt, as become a damſel bred in a foreſt.

Duſhm. The artiſt had omitted a *Sirſha*-flower with its peduncle fixed behind her ſoft ear, and its filaments waving over part of her cheek; and between her breaſts muſt be placed a knot of delicate fibres, from the ſtalks of water-lilies, like the rays of an autumnal moon.

Mádh. Why does the queen cover part of her face, as if ſhe was afraid of ſomething, with the tips of her fingers, that glow like the flowers of the *Cuvalaya?* Oh! I now perceive an impudent bee, that thief of odours, who ſeems eager to ſip honey from the lotos of her mouth.

Duſhm. A bee! drive off the importunate inſect.

Mádh. The king has ſupreme power over all offenders.

Duſhm. O male bee, who approacheſt the lovely inhabitants of a flowery grove, why doſt thou expoſe thyſelf to the pain of being rejected? See, where thy female ſits on a bloſſom, and, though thirſty, waits for thy return: without thee ſhe will not taſte its nectar.

Miſr. (*aſide*) A wild, but apt, addreſs!

Mádh. The perfidy of male bees is proverbial.

Duſhm. (*angrily*) Shouldſt thou touch, O bee, the lip of my darling ruddy as a freſh leaf, on which no wind has yet breathed, a lip from which I drank ſweetneſs in the banquet of love, thou ſhalt, by my order, be impriſoned in the centre of a lotos. Doſt thou ſtill diſobey me?

Mádh. How can he fail to obey, ſince you denounce ſo ſevere a puniſhment? *(aſide, laughing)* He is ſtark mad with love and affliction; whilſt I, by keeping him company, ſhall be as mad as he without either.

Duſhm. After my poſitive injunction art thou ſtill unmoved?

Miſr. (aſide) How does exceſs of paſſion alter even the wiſe!

Mádh. Why, my friend, it is only a painted bee.

Miſr. (aſide) Oh! I perceive his miſtake: it ſhows the perfection of the art. But why does he continue muſing?

Duſhm. What ill-natured remark was that? Whilſt I am enjoying the rapture of beholding Her, to whom my ſoul is attached, thou, cruel remembrancer, telleſt me that it is only a picture. *Weeping.*

Miſr. (aſide) Such are the woes of a ſeparated lover! He is on all ſides entangled in ſorrow.

Duſhm. Why do I thus indulge unremitted grief? That intercourſe with my darling, which dreams would give, is prevented by my continued

inability to repoſe; and my tears will not ſuffer me to view her diſtinctly even in this picture.

Miſr. *(aſide)* His miſery acquits him entirely of having deſerted her in his perfect ſenſes.

The Damſel *re-enters.*

Dams. As I was advancing, O king, with my box of pencils and colours——

Duſhm. *(haſtily)* What happened?

Dams. It was forcibly ſeized by the queen *Vaſumatì*, whom her maid *Pingalicà* had apprized of my errand; and ſhe ſaid: "I will myſelf deliver the "caſket to the ſon of my lord."

Madh. How came you to be releaſed?

Dams. While the queen's maid was diſengaging the ſkirt of her mantle, which had been caught by the branch of a thorny ſhrub, I ſtole away.

Duſhm. Friend *Mádhavya*, my great attention to *Vaſumatì* has made her arrogant; and ſhe will ſoon be here: be it your care to conceal the picture.

Madh. *(aſide)* I wiſh you would conceal it your-

ſelf. *(he takes the picture, and riſes) (aloud)* If, indeed, you will diſentangle me from the net of your ſecret apartments, to which I am confined, and ſuffer me to dwell on the wall *Méghach'handa*, which encircles them, I will hide the picture in a place, where none ſhall ſee it but pigeons.

He goes out.

Miſr. (aſide) How honourably he keeps his former engagements, though his heart be now fixed on another object!

A Warder *enters with a leaf.*

Ward. May the king proſper!

Duſhm. Warder, haſt thou lately ſeen the queen *Vaſumatì?*

Ward. I met her, O king; but, when ſhe perceived the leaf in my hand, ſhe retired.

Duſhm. The queen diſtinguiſhes times: ſhe would not impede my publick buſineſs.

Ward. The chief miniſter ſends this meſſage: "I have carefully ſtated a caſe, which has ariſen "in the City, and accurately committed it to "writing: let the king deign to conſider it."

Duſhm. Give me the leaf——

Receiving it, and reading.

" Be it preſented at the foot of the king, that " a merchant named *Dhanavriddhi*, who had " extenſive commerce at ſea, was loſt in a late " ſhipwreck: he had no child born; and has left " a fortune of many millions, which belong, if " the king commands, to the royal treaſury." *(with ſorrow)* Oh! how great a misfortune it is to die childleſs! Yet with his affluence he muſt have had many wives: let an inquiry be made, whether any one of them is pregnant.

Ward. I have heard, that his wife, the daughter of an excellent man, named *Sácótaca*, has already performed the ceremonies uſual on pregnancy.

Duſhm. The child, though unborn, has a title to his father's property. Go: bid the miniſter make my judgement publick.

Ward. I obey. *Going.*

Duſhm. Stay awhile——

Ward. (returning) I am here.

Duſhm. Whether he had, or had not, left offſpring, the eſtate ſhould not have been forfeited.

Let it be proclaimed, that, whatever kinſman any one of my ſubjects may loſe, *Duſhmanta* (excepting always the caſe of forfeiture for crimes) will ſupply in tender affection the place of that kinſman.

Ward. The proclamation ſhall be made.

Goes out.

Duſhmanta *continues meditating.*

Ward. (returning) O king, the royal decree, which proves, that your virtues are awake after a long ſlumber, was heard with burſts of applauſe.

Duſhm. (ſighing deeply) When an illuſtrious man dies, alas, without an heir, his eſtate goes to a ſtranger; and ſuch will be the fate of all the wealth accumulated by the ſons of *Puru*.

Ward. Heaven avert the calamity! *Goes out.*

Duſhm. Wo is me! I am ſtripped of all the felicity, which I once enjoyed.

Miſr. (aſide) How his heart dwells on the idea of his beloved!

Duſhm. My lawful wife, whom I baſely deſerted, remains fixed in my ſoul: ſhe would have been the glory of my family, and might have

produced a ſon brilliant as the richeſt fruit of the teeming earth.

Miſr. *(aſide)* She is not forſaken by all; and ſoon, I truſt, will be thine.

Dams. *(aſide)* What a change has the miniſter made in the king by ſending him that miſchievous leaf! Behold, he is deluged with tears.

Duſhm. Ah me! the departed ſouls of my anceſtors, who claim a ſhare in the funeral cake, which I have no ſon to offer, are apprehenſive of loſing their due honour, when *Duſhmanta* ſhall be no more on earth: who then, alas, will perform in our family thoſe obſequies, which the *Veda* preſcribes? My forefathers muſt drink, inſtead of a pure libation, this flood of tears, the only offering, which a man, who dies childleſs, can make them. *Weeping.*

Miſr. *(aſide)* Such a veil obſcures the king's eyes, that he thinks it total darkneſs, though a lamp be now ſhining brightly.

Dams. Afflict not yourſelf immoderately: our lord is young; and, when ſons, illuſtrious as himſelf, ſhall be born of other queens, his anceſtors will be redeemed from their offences com-

mitted here below.

Duſhm. (with agony) The race of *Puru*, which has hitherto been fruitful and unblemiſhed, ends in me; as the river *Sereſwatì* diſappears in a region unworthy of her divine ſtream. *He faints.*

Dams. Let the king reſume confidence ——

She ſupports him.

Miſr. (aſide) Shall I reſtore him? No; he will ſpeedily be rouſed. I heard the nymph *Dévajananì* conſoling *Sacontalá* in theſe words: "As "the Gods delight in their portion of ſacrifices, "thus wilt thou ſoon be delighted by the love of "thy huſband." I go, therefore, to raiſe her ſpirits, and pleaſe my friend *Ménacà*, with an account of his virtues and his affection.

She riſes aloft and diſappears.

Behind the ſcenes) A *Bráhmen* muſt not be ſlain: ſave the life a *Bráhmen*.

Duſhm. (reviving and liſtening) Hah! was not that the plaintive voice of *Madhavya?*

Dams. He has, probably, been caught with the picture in his hand by *Pingalicà* and the other maids.

Duſhm. Go, *Chaturicà*, and reprove the queen

in my name for not reſtraining her ſervants.

Dams. As the king commands. *She goes out.*

Again behind the ſcenes.) I am a *Bráhmen*, and muſt not be put to death.

Duſhm. It is manifeſtly ſome *Bráhmen* in great danger. Hola! who is there?

The old Chamberlain enters.

Cham. What is the king's pleaſure?

Duſhm. Inquire, why the faint-hearted *Mádhavya* cries out ſo piteouſly.

Cham. I will know in an inſtant.

He goes out, and returns trembling.

Duſhm. Is there any alarm, *Párvatáyana?*

Cham. Alarm enough!

Duſhm. What cauſes thy tremour? Thus do men tremble through age: fear ſhakes the old man's body, as the breeze agitates the leaves of the *Pippala*.

Cham. Oh! deliver thy friend.

Duſhm. Deliver him! from what?

Cham. From diſtreſs and danger.

Duſhm. Speak more plainly.

Cham. The wall, which looks to all quarters of the heavens, and is named from the clouds, which

cover it, *Méghach'handa*——

Duſhm. What of that?

Cham. From the ſummit of that wall, the pinnacle of which is hardly attainable even by the blue-necked pigeons, an evil being, inviſible to human eyes, has violently carried away the friend of your childhood.

Duſhm. (ſtarting up haſtily) What! are even my ſecret apartments infeſted by ſupernatural agents? Royalty is ever ſubject to moleſtation. A king knows not even the miſchiefs, which his own negligence daily and hourly occaſions: how then ſhould he know what path his people are treading; and how ſhould he correct their manners, when his own are uncorrected?

Behind the ſcenes) Oh, help! Oh, releaſe me.

Duſhm. (liſtening and advancing) Fear not, my friend, fear nothing ———.

Behind the ſcenes) Not fear, when a monſter has caught me by the nape of my neck, and means to ſnap my backbone, as he would ſnap a ſugarcane!

Duſhm. (darting his eyes round) Hola! my bow—

A Warder enters with the king's bow and quiver.

Ward. Here are our great hero's arms.

Duſhmanta *takes his bow and an arrow.*

Behind the ſcenes) Here I ſtand; and, thirſting for thy freſh blood, will ſlay thee ſtruggling as a tiger ſlays a calf. Where now is thy protector, *Duſhmanta*, who graſps his bow to defend the oppreſſed?

Duſhm. (wrathfully) The demon names me with defiance. Stay, thou baſeſt of monſters. Here am I, and thou ſhalt not long exiſt. *(raiſing his bow)* Show the way, *Párvatáyana*, to the ſtairs of the terrace.

Cham. This way, great king.—

All go out haſtily.

The Scene changes to a broad Terrace.

Duſhm. (looking round) Ah! the place is deſerted.

Behind the ſcenes) Save me, oh! ſave me. I ſee thee, my friend, but thou canſt not diſcern me, who, like a mouſe in the claws of a cat, have no hope of life.

Duſhm. But this arrow ſhall diſtinguiſh thee

from thy foe, in ſpight of the magick, which renders thee inviſible. *Mádhavya*, ſtand firm; and thou, blood-thirſty fiend, think not of deſtroying Him, whom I love and will protect. See, I thus fix a ſhaft, which ſhall pierce thee, who deſerveſt death, and ſhall ſave a *Bráhmen*, who deſerves long life; as the celeſtial bird ſips the milk, and leaves the water, which has been mingled with it.

He draws the bowſtring.

Enter Mátali *and* Mádhavya.

Mát. The god *Indra* has deſtined evil demons to fall by thy ſhafts: againſt them let thy bow be drawn, and caſt on thy friends eyes bright with affection.

Duſhm. (aſtoniſhed, giving back his arms) Oh! *Mátali*, welcome; I greet the driver of *Indra's* car.

Máh. What! this cutthroat was putting me to death, and thou greeteſt him with a kind welcome!

Mát. (ſmiling) O king, live long and conquer! Hear, on what errand I am diſpatched by the ru-

ler of the firmament.

Duſhm. I am humbly attentive.

Mát. There is a race of *Dánava's*, the children of *Cálanémi*, whom it is found hard to ſubdue —-

Duſhm. This I have heard already from *Nárad.*

Mát. The God with an hundred ſacrifices, unable to quell that gigantick race, commiſſions thee, his approved friend, to aſſail them in the front of battle; as the ſun with ſeven ſteeds deſpairs of overcoming the dark legions of night, and gives way to the moon, who eaſily ſcatters them. Mount, therefore, with me, the car of *Indra*, and, graſping thy bow, advance to aſſured victory.

Duſhm. Such a mark of diſtinction from the prince of good genii honours me highly; but ſay, why you treated ſo roughly my poor friend *Mádhavya.*

Mát. Perceiving, that, for ſome reaſon or another, you were grievouſly afflicted, I was deſirous to rouſe your ſpirits by provoking you to wrath. The fire blazes, when wood is thrown on it; the ſerpent, when provoked, darts his head againſt the aſſailant; and a man, capable

of acquiring glory, exerts himſelf, when his courage is excited.

Duſhm. (to *Mádhavya)* My friend, the command of *Diveſpetir* muſt inſtantly be obeyed: go, therefore, and carry the intelligence to my chief miniſter; ſaying to him in my name: "Let thy "wiſdom ſecure my people from danger, while "this braced bow has a different employment."

Mádh. I obey; but wiſh it could have been employed without aſſiſtance from my terror.

He goes out.

Mát. Aſcend, great king.

Duſhmanta *aſcends, and* Mátali *drives off the car.*

ACT VII.

Dushmanta *with* Mátali *in the car of* Indra, *supposed to be above the clouds.*

Dushm. I am sensible, O *Mátali*, that, for having executed the commission, which *Indra* gave me, I deserved not such a profusion of honours.

Mát. Neither of you is satisfied. You, who have conferred so great a benefit on the God of thunder, consider it as a trifling act of devotion; whilst he reckons not all his kindness equal to the benefit conferred.

Dushm. There is no comparison between the service and the reward. He surpassed my warmest expectation, when, before he dismissed me, he made me sit on half of his throne, thus exalting me before all the inhabitants of the Empyreum; and, smiling to see his son *Jayanta*, who stood near him, ambitious of the same honour, perfumed my bosom with essence of heavenly san-

dal-wood, throwing over my neck a garland of flowers blown in paradiſe.

Mát. O king, you deſerve all imaginable rewards from the ſovereign of good genii; whoſe empyreal feats have twice been diſentangled from the thorns of *Danu*'s race; formerly by the claws of the man-lion, and lately by thy unerring ſhafts.

Duſhm. My victory proceeded wholly from the auſpices of the God; as, on earth, when ſervants proſper in great enterprizes, they owe their ſucceſs to the magnificence of their lords. Could *Arun* diſpel the ſhades of night, if the deity with a thouſand beams had not placed him before the car of day?

Mát. That caſe, indeed, is parallel — *(driving ſlowly)* See, O king, the full exaltation of thy glory, which now rides on the back of heaven! The delighted genii have been collecting, among the trees of life, thoſe crimſon and azure dyes, with which the celeſtial damſels tinge their beautiful feet; and they now are writing thy actions in verſes worthy of divine melody.

Duſhm. (modeſtly) In my tranſport, O *Mátali*,

after the rout of the giants, this wonderful place had eſcaped my notice. In what path of the winds are we now journeying?

Mát. This is the way, which leads along the triple river, heaven's brighteſt ornament, and cauſes yon luminaries to roll in a circle with diffuſed beams: it is the courſe of a gentle breeze, which ſupports the floating forms of the Gods; and this path was the ſecond ſtep of *Viſhnu*, when he confounded the proud *Vali*.

Duſhm. My internal ſoul, which acts by exterior organs, is filled by the ſight with a charming complacency. *(looking at the wheels)* We are now paſſing, I gueſs, through the region of clouds.

Mát. Whence do you form that conjecture?

Duſhm. The car itſelf inſtructs me, that we are moving over clouds pregnant with ſhowers; for the circumference of its wheels diſperſes pellucid water; the horſes of *Indra* ſparkle with lightning; and I now ſee the warbling *Chátaca*'s deſcend from their neſts on the ſummits of mountains.

Mát. It is even ſo; and, in another moment, you will be in the country, which you govern.

Duſhm. (looking down) Through the rapid, yet imperceptible, deſcent of the heavenly ſteeds, I now perceive the allotted ſtation of men. Aſtoniſhing proſpect! It is yet ſo diſtant from us, that the lowlands appear confounded with the high mountain-tops; the trees erect their branchy ſhoulders, but ſeem leafleſs; the rivers look like bright lines, but their waters vaniſh; and, at this inſtant, the globe of earth ſeems thrown upwards by ſome ſtupendous power.

Mát. (looking with reverence on the earth). How delightful is the abode of mankind! O king, you ſaw diſtinctly.

Duſhm. Say, *Mátali*, what mountain is that, which, like an evening cloud, pours exhilarating ſtreams, and forms a golden zone between the weſtern and eaſtern ſeas?

Mát. That, O king, is the mountain of *Gandharva's*, named *Himacáta*: the univerſe contains not a more excellent place for the ſucceſsful devotion of the pious. There *Caſyapa*, father of the immortals, ruler of men, ſon of *Maríchi*, who ſprang from the ſelf-exiſtent, reſides with his conſort *Áditi*, bleſſed in holy retirement.

Duſhm. (devoutly) This occaſion of attaining good fortune muſt not be neglected: may I approach the divine pair and do them complete homage?

Mát. By all means. It is an excellent idea! We are now deſcended on earth.

Duſhm. (with wonder) Theſe chariot-wheels yield no ſound; no duſt riſes from them; and the deſcent of the car gave me no ſhock.

Mát. Such is the difference, O king, between thy car and that of *Indra!*

Duſhm. Where is the holy retreat of *Márícha?*

Mát. (pointing) A little beyond that grove, where you ſee a pious *Yógí*, motionleſs as a pollard, holding his thick buſhy hair, and fixing his eyes on the ſolar orb. Mark; his body is half covered with a white ant's edifice made of raiſed clay; the ſkin of a ſnake ſupplies the place of his ſacerdotal thread, and part of it girds his loins; a number of knotty plants encircle and wound his neck; and ſurrounding birds' neſts almoſt conceal his ſhoulders.

Duſhm. I bow to a man of his auſtere devotion.

Mát. (checking the reins) Thus far, and enough.

We now enter the ſanctuary of him, who rules the world, and the groves, which are watered by ſtreams from celeſtial ſources.

Duſhm. This aſylum is more delightful than paradiſe itſelf: I could fancy myſelf bathing in a pool of nectar.

Mát. (ſtopping the car) Let the king deſcend.

Duſhm. (joyfully deſcending) How canſt thou leave the car?

Mát. On ſuch an occaſion it will remain fixed: we may both leave it. This way, victorious hero, this way.—Behold the retreat of the truly pious.

Duſhm. I ſee with equal amazement both the pious and their awful retreat. It becomes, indeed, pure ſpirits to feed on balmy air in a foreſt blooming with trees of life; to bathe in rills dyed yellow with the golden duſt of the lotos, and to fortify their virtue in the myſterious bath; to meditate in caves, the pebbles of which are unblemiſhed gems; and to reſtrain their paſſions, even though nymphs of exquiſite beauty frolick around them: in this grove alone is attained the ſummit of true piety, to which other hermits in vain aſpire.

Mát. In exalted minds the desire of perfect excellence continually increases. *(turning aside)* Tell me, *Vriddhasácalya*, in what business is the divine son of *Maríchi* now engaged? What sayst thou? Is he conversing with the daughter of *Dacsha*, who practises all the virtues of a dutiful wife, and is consulting him on moral questions? Then we must await his leisure.—*(to* Dushmanta) Rest, O king, under the shade of this *Asóca*-tree, whilst I announce thy arrival to the father of *Indra*.

Dushm. As you judge right. Mátali *goes out.*

Dushm. *(feeling his right arm throb)* Why, O my arm, dost thou flatter me with a vain omen? My former happiness is lost, and misery only remains.

Behind the scenes) Be not so restless: in every situation thou showest thy bad temper.

Dushm. *(listening)* Hah! this is no place, surely, for a malignant disposition. Who can be thus rebuked? *(looking with surprize)* I see a child, but with no childish countenance or strength, whom two female anchorites are endeavouring to keep in order; while he forcibly pulls towards him, in

rough play, a lion's whelp with a torn mane, who ſeems juſt dragged from the half-ſucked nipple of the lioneſs!

A little Boy and two female Attendants are diſcovered, as deſcribed by the king.

Boy: Open thy mouth, lion's whelp, that I may count thy teeth.

Firſt Atten. Intractable child! Why doſt thou torment the wild animals of this foreſt, whom we cheriſh, as if they were our own offspring? Thou ſeemeſt even to ſport in anger. Aptly have the hermits named thee *Servademana*, ſince thou *tameſt all* creatures.

Duſhm. Ah! what means it, that my heart inclines to this boy, as if he were my own ſon? *(meditating)* Alas! I have no ſon; and the reflexion makes me once more ſoft-hearted.

Second Atten. The lioneſs will tear thee to pieces, if thou releaſe not her whelp.

Boy: (ſmiling) Oh! I am greatly afraid of her, to be ſure! *He bites his lip, as in defiance of her.*

Duſhm. (aſide, amazed) The child exhibits the

rudiments of heroick valour, and looks like fire which blazes from the addition of dry fuel.

First Atten. My beloved child, ſet at liberty this young prince of wild beaſts; and I will give thee a prettier plaything.

Boy; Give it firſt.—Where is it?

Stretching out his hand.

Duſhm. (aſide, gazing on the child's palm) What! the very palm of his hand bears the marks of empire; and, whilſt he thus eagerly extends it, ſhows its lines of exquiſite network, and glows like a lotos expanded at early dawn, when the ruddy ſplendour of its petals hides all other tints in obſcurity.

Second Atten. Mere words, my *Suvritá*, will not pacify him. Go, I pray, to my cottage, where thou wilt find a plaything made for the hermit's child, *Sancara:* it is a peacock of earthen ware painted with rich colours.

First Atten. I will bring it ſpeedily.

She goes out.

Boy: In the meantime I will play with the young lion.

Second Atten. (looking at him with a ſmile) Let

him go, I entreat thee.

Duſhm. *(aſide)* I feel the tendereſt affection for this unmanageable child. *(ſighing)* How ſweet muſt be the delight of virtuous fathers, when they ſoil their boſoms with duſt by lifting up their playful children, who charm them with inarticulate prattle, and ſhow the white bloſſoms of their teeth, while they laugh innocently at every trifling occurrence!

Second Atten. *(raiſing her finger)* What! Doſt thou ſhow no attention to me? *(looking round)* Are any of the hermits near? *(ſeeing* Duſhmanta) Oh! let me requeſt you, gentle ſtranger, to releaſe the lion's whelp, who cannot diſengage himſelf from the graſp of this robuſt child.

Duſhm. I will endeavour —— *(approaching the Boy, and ſmiling)* O thou, who art the ſon of a pious anchorite, how canſt thou diſhonour thy father, whom thy virtues would make happy, by violating the rules of this conſecrated foreſt? It becomes a black ſerpent only, to infeſt the boughs of a fragrant ſandal-tree.

The Boy releaſes the lion.

Second Atten. I thank you, courteous gueſt;

but he is not the ſon of an anchorite.

Duſhm. His actions, indeed, which are conformable to his robuſtneſs, indicate a different birth; but my opinion aroſe from the ſanctity of the place, which he inhabits. *(taking the boy by the hand)* Oh! *(aſide)* Since it gives me ſuch delight merely to touch the hand of this child, who is the hopeful ſcion of a family unconnected with mine, what rapture muſt be felt by the fortunate man, from whom he ſprang?

Second Atten. *(gazing on them alternately)* O wonderful!

Duſhm. What has raiſed your wonder?

Second Atten. The aſtoniſhing reſemblance between the child and you, gentle ſtranger, to whom he bears no relation. It ſurprized me alſo, to ſee, that, although he has childiſh humours and had no former acquaintance with you, yet your words have reſtored him to his natural good temper.

Duſhm. *(raiſing the Boy to his boſom)* Holy matron, if he be not the ſon of a hermit, what then is the name of his family?

Second Atten. He is deſcended from *Puru.*

Duſhm. (aſide) Hah! thence, no doubt, ſprings his diſpoſition and my affection for him. *(ſetting him down) (aloud)* It is, I know, an eſtabliſhed uſage among the princes of *Puru*'s race, to dwell at firſt in rich palaces with ſtuccoed walls, where they protect and cheriſh the world, but in the decline of life to ſeek humbler manſions near the roots of venerable trees, where hermits with ſubdued paſſions practiſe auſtere devotion. I wonder, however, that this boy, who moves like a god, could have been born of a mere mortal.

Second Atten. Affable ſtranger, your wonder will ceaſe, when you know, that his mother is related to a celeſtial nymph, and brought him forth in the ſacred foreſt of *Caſyapa*.

Duſhm. (aſide) I am tranſported. This is a freſh ground of hope. *(aloud)* What virtuous monarch took his excellent mother by the hand?

Second Atten. Oh! I muſt not give celebrity to name of a king, who deſerted his lawful wife.

Duſhm. (aſide) Ah! ſhe means me. Let me now aſk the name of the ſweet child's mother— *(meditating)* But it is againſt good manners to inquire concerning the wife of another man.

The First Attendant *re-enters with a toy.*

First Atten. Look, *Servademana*, look at the beauty of this bird. *(Saconta lávanyam)*

Boy: (looking eagerly round) Sacontalà! Oh, where is my beloved mother?

Both Attendants laugh.

First Atten. He tenderly loves his mother, and was deceived by an equivocal phraſe.

Second Atten. My child, ſhe meant only the beautiful ſhape and colours of this peacock.

Duſhm. (aſide) Is my *Sacontalá* then his mother? Or has that dear name been given to ſome other woman? This converſation reſembles the fallacious appearance of water in a deſert, which ends in bitter diſappointment to the ſtag parched with thirſt.

Boy: I ſhall like the peacock, if it can run and fly; not elſe. *(He takes it.)*

First Atten. (looking round in confuſion) Alas, the child's amulet is not on his wriſt.

Duſhm. Be not alarmed. It was dropped, while he was playing with the lion: I ſee it, and

will put it into your hand.

Both: Oh! beware of touching it.

First Atten. Ah! he has actually taken it up.

They both gaze with ſurprize on each other.

Duſhm. Here it is; but why would you have reſtrained me from touching this bright gem?

Second Atten. Great monarch, this divine amulet has a wonderful power, and was given to the child by the ſon of *Maríchi*, as ſoon as the ſacred rites had been performed after his birth: whenever it fell on the ground, no human being but the father or mother of this boy could have touched it unhurt.

Duſhm. What, if a ſtranger had taken it?

First Atten. It would have become a ſerpent and wounded him.

Duſhm. Have you ſeen that conſequence on any ſimilar occaſion?

Both: Frequently.

Duſhm. (with tranſport) I may then exult on the completion of my ardent deſire.

He embraces the child.

Second Atten. Come, *Suvritá*, let us carry the delightful intelligence to *Sacontalá*, whom the

harſh duties of a ſeparated wife have ſo long oppreſſed. *The Attendants go out.*

Boy: Farewel; I muſt go to my mother.

Duſhm. My darling ſon, thou wilt make her happy by going to her with me.

Boy: Duſhmanta is my father; and you are not *Duſhmanta.*

Duſhm. Even thy denial of me gives me delight.

Sacontalá *enters in mourning apparel, with her long hair twiſted in a ſingle braid, and flowing down her back.*

Sac. (aſide) Having heard that my child's amulet has proved its divine power, I muſt either be ſtrangely diffident of my good fortune, or that event, which *Miſracéſi* predicted, has actually happened. *Advancing.*

Duſhm. (with a mixture of joy and ſorrow) Ah! do I ſee the incomparable *Sacontalá* clad in forbid weeds? Her face is emaciated by the performance of auſtere duties; one twiſted lock floats over her ſhoulder; and, with a mind perfectly pure, ſhe ſupports the long abſence of her huſband, whoſe unkindneſs exceeded all bounds.

Sac. (ſeeing him, yet doubting) Is that the ſon of my lord grown pale with penitence and affliction? If not, who is it, that ſullies with his touch the hand of my child, whoſe amulet ſhould have preſerved him from ſuch indignity?

Boy: (going haſtily to Sacontalá*)* Mother, here is a ſtranger, who calls me *ſon.*

Duſhm. O my beſt beloved, I have treated thee cruelly; but my cruelty is ſucceeded by the warmeſt affection; and I implore your remembrance and forgiveneſs.

Sac. (aſide) Be confident, O my heart! *(aloud)* I ſhall be moſt happy, when the king's anger has paſſed away. *(aſide)* This muſt be the ſon of my lord.

Duſhm. By the kindneſs of heaven, O lovelieſt of thy ſex, thou ſtandeſt again before me, whoſe memory was obſcured by the gloom of faſcination; as the ſtar *Róhinì*, at the end of an eclipſe, rejoins his beloved moon.

Sac. May the king be—— *She burſts into tears.*

Duſhm. My darling, though the word *victorious* be ſuppreſſed by thy weeping, yet I muſt have victory, ſince I ſee thee again, though with pale

lips, and a body unadorned.

Boy: What man is this, mother?

Sac. Sweet child, aſk the divinity, who preſides over the fortunes of us both. *She weeps.*

Duſhm. O my only beloved, baniſh from thy mind my cruel deſertion of thee. A violent phrenſy overpowered my ſoul. Such, when the darkneſs of illuſion prevails, are the actions of the beſt-intentioned; as a blind man, when a friend binds his head with a wreath of flowers, miſtakes it for a twining ſnake, and fooliſhly rejects it. *He falls at her feet.*

Sac. Riſe, my huſband, Oh! riſe—My happineſs has been long interrupted; but joy now ſucceeds to affliction, ſince the ſon of my lord ſtill loves me. *(He riſes)* How was the remembrance of this unfortunate woman reſtored to the mind of my lord's ſon?

Duſhm. When the dart of miſery ſhall be wholly extracted from my boſom, I will tell you all; but, ſince the anguiſh of my ſoul has in part ceaſed, let me firſt wipe off that tear, which trickles from thy delicate eye-laſh; and thus efface the memory of all the tears, which

my delirium has made thee ſhed.

He ſtretches out his hand.

Sac. (wiping off her tears, and ſeeing the ring on his finger) Ah! is that the fatal ring?

Duſhm. Yes; by the ſurprizing recovery of it my memory was reſtored.

Sac. Its influence, indeed, has been great; ſince it has brought back the loſt confidence of my huſband.

Duſhm. Take it then, as a beautiful plant receives a flower from the returning ſeaſon of joy.

Sac. I cannot again truſt it. Let it be worn by the ſon of my lord.

Mátali *enters.*

Mát. By the will of heaven the king has happily met his beloved wife, and ſeen the countenance of his little ſon.

Duſhm. It was by the company of my friend, that my deſire attained maturity. But ſay, was not this fortunate event previouſly known to *Indra?*

Mát. (ſmiling) What is unknown to the gods?

But come: the divine *Maríchа* deſires to ſee thee.

Duſhm. Beloved, take our ſon by the hand; and let me preſent you both to the father of immortals.

Sac. I really am aſhamed, even in thy preſence, to approach the deities.

Duſhm. It is highly proper on ſo happy an occaſion. Come, I entreat thee. *They all advance.*

The Scene is withdrawn, and Caſyapa *is diſcovered on a throne converſing with* Aditi.

Cas. (pointing to the king) That, O daughter of *Dacſha*, is the hero, who led the ſquadrons of thy ſon to the front of battle, a ſovereign of the earth, *Duſhmanta*; by the means of whoſe bow the thunder-bolt of *Indra* (all its work being accompliſhed) is now a mere ornament of his heavenly palace.

Adi. He bears in his form all the marks of exalted majeſty.

Mát. (*to* Duſhmanta) The parents of the twelve *Aditya*'s, O king, are gazing on thee, as on their own offspring, with eyes of affection.

Approach them, illuſtrious prince.

Duſhm. Are thoſe, O *Mátali*, the divine pair, ſprung from *Maríchi* and *Dacſha*? Are thoſe the grand-children of *Brahmá*, to whom the ſelf-exiſtent gave birth in the beginning; whom inſpired mortals pronounce the fountain of glory apparent in the form of twelve ſuns; they, who produced my benefactor, the lord of a hundred ſacrifices, and ruler of three worlds?

Mát. Even they — (*proſtrating himſelf with* Duſhmanta) Great beings, the king *Duſhmanta*, who has executed the commands of your ſon *Vá-ſava*, falls humbly before your throne.

Cas. Continue long to rule the world.

Adi. Long be a warrior with a car unſhattered in combat.

Sacontalá *and her ſon proſtrate themſelves.*

Cas. Daughter, may thy huſband be like *Indra!* May thy ſon reſemble *Jayanta!* And mayſt thou (whom no benediction could better ſuit) be equal in proſperity to the daughter of *Puloman!*

Adi. Preſerve, my child, a conſtant unity with thy lord: and may this boy, for a great length of years, be the ornament and joy of you both!

Now be ſeated near us. *They all ſit down.*

Cas. (looking at them by turns) *Sacontalá* is the model of excellent wives; her ſon is dutiful; and thou, O king, haſt three rare advantages, true piety, abundant wealth, and active virtue.

Duſhm. O divine being, having obtained the former object of my moſt ardent wiſhes, I now have reached the ſummit of earthly happineſs through thy favour, and thy benizon will enſure its permanence. Firſt appears the flower, then the fruit; firſt clouds are collected, then the ſhower falls: ſuch is the regular courſe of cauſes and effects; and thus, when thy indulgence preceded, felicity naturally followed.

Mát. Great indeed, O king, has been the kindneſs of the primeval *Bráhmans.*

Duſhm. Bright ſon of *Maríchi,* this thy handmaid was married to me by the ceremony of *Gandharva*'s, and, after a time, was conducted to my palace by ſome of her family; but, my memory having failed through delirium, I rejected her, and thus committed a grievous offence againſt the venerable *Canna,* who is of thy divine lineage: afterwards, on ſeeing this fatal ring, I

remembered my love and my nuptials; but the whole tranſaction yet fills me with wonder. My ſoul was confounded with ſtrange ignorance, that obſcured my ſenſes; as if a man were to ſee an elephant marching before him, yet to doubt what animal it could be, till he diſcovered by the traces of his large feet, that it was an elephant.

Cas. Ceaſe, my ſon, to charge thyſelf with an offence committed ignorantly, and, therefore, innocently. Now hear me.

Duſhm. I am devoutly attentive.

Cas. When the nymph *Ménacà* led *Sacontalà* from the place, where thy deſertion of her had afflicted her ſoul, ſhe brought her to the palace of *Aditi*; and I knew, by the power of meditation on the Supreme Being, that thy forgetfulneſs of thy pious and lawful conſort had proceeded from the imprecation of *Durvásas*, and that the charm would terminate on the ſight of thy ring.

Duſhm. (aſide) My name then is cleared from infamy.

Sac. Happy am I, that the ſon of my lord, who now recognizes me, denied me through ignorance, and not with real averſion. The terrible impre-

cation was heard, I ſuppoſe, when my mind was intent on a different object, by my two beloved friends, who, with extreme affection, concealed it from me to ſpare my feelings, but adviſed me at parting to ſhow the ring, if my huſband ſhould have forgotten me.

Cas. (*turning to* Sacontalá) Thou art apprized, my daughter, of the whole truth, and muſt no longer reſent the behaviour of thy lord. He rejected thee, when his memory was impaired by the force of a charm; and, when the gloom was diſpelled, his conjugal affection revived; as a mirror, whoſe ſurface has been ſullied, reflects no image; but exhibits perfect reſemblances, when its poliſh has been reſtored.

Duſhm. Such, indeed, was my ſituation.

Cas. My ſon *Duſhmanta*, haſt thou embraced thy child by *Sacontalá*, on whoſe birth I myſelf performed the ceremonies preſcribed in the *Véda*?

Duſhm. Holy *Marícha*, he is the glory of my houſe.

Cas. Know too, that his heroick virtue will raiſe him to a dominion extended from ſea to ſea: before he has paſſed the ocean of mortal life,

he ſhall rule, unequalled in combat, this earth with ſeven peninſula's; and, as he now is called *Servademana*, becauſe he *tames* even in childhood the fierceſt animals, ſo, in his riper years, he ſhall acquire the name of *BHERETA*, becauſe he ſhall *ſuſtain* and *nouriſh* the world.

Duſhm. A boy, educated by the ſon of *Maríchi*, muſt attain the ſummit of greatneſs.

Adi. Now let *Sacontalá*, who is reſtored to happineſs, convey intelligence to *Canna* of all theſe events: her mother *Menacà* is in my family, and knows all, that has paſſed.

Sac. The goddeſs propoſes, what I moſt ardently wiſh.

Cas. By the force of true piety the whole ſcene will be preſent to the mind of *Canna*.

Duſhm. The devout ſage muſt be ſtill exceſſively indignant at my frantick behaviour.

Cas. (meditating) Then let him hear from me the delightful news, that his foſter-child has been tenderly received by her huſband, and that both are happy with the little warriour, who ſprang from them. Hola! who is in waiting?

A Pupil enters.

Pup. Great being, I am here.

Cas. Haſten, *Gólava*, through the light air, and in my name inform the venerable *Canna*, that *Sacontalá* has a charming ſon by *Duſhmanta*, whoſe affection for her was reſtored with his remembrance, on the termination of the ſpell raiſed by the angry *Durváſas*.

Pup. As the divinity commands. *He goes out.*

Cas. My ſon, reaſcend the car of *Indra* with thy conſort and child, and return happy to thy imperial ſeat.

Duſhm. Be it, as *Márícha* ordains.

Cas. Henceforth may the God of the atmoſphere with copious rain give abundance to thy affectionate ſubjects; and mayſt thou with frequent ſacrifices maintain the Thunderer's friendſhip! By numberleſs interchanges of good offices between you both, may benefits reciprocally be conferred on the inhabitants of the two worlds!

Duſhm. Powerful being, I will be ſtudious, as far as I am able, to attain that felicity.

Cas. What other favours can I beſtow on thee?

Duſhm. Can any favours exceed thoſe already beſtowed? Let every king apply himſelf to the

attainment of happineſs for his people; let *Sereſ-watì*, the goddeſs of liberal arts, be adored by all readers of the *Véda*; and may *Siva*, with an azure neck and red locks, eternally potent and ſelf-exiſting, avert from me the pain of another birth in this periſhable world, the ſeat of crimes and of puniſhment! *All go out.*

THE END.

CORRECTIONS.

Page	xii.	&c.	*for*	wardour	*put* warder.
	66.	Line 10.		*slura*	*usira*.
	82.	20.		palace	place.
	169.	20.	*before*	name	the.
	173.	20.	*for*	his	her.

In ſome of the ſheets a few letters and points have dropped out; but the reader will eaſily ſupply them.

A

COLLECTION

OF

JESTS, EPIGRAMS, EPITAPHS, &c.

—— —— That little Things are beſt,
(Aſſiſt me little God of Jeſt)
Is plain, becauſe they moſt delight,
And pleaſe with Beauty exquiſite.
A Work perform'd in narrow Bounds,
Moſt to the Author's Fame redounds.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by R. FLEMING. M.DCC.LIII.